

INQUIRY

FIGHTING THE
PAC-MAN
MENACE - See page 18

THE WAY WE WEREN'T

William Shawcross on
Norman Podhoretz's Vietnam Fantasies



The Psychology of Freedom Liberty and Love as a Way of Life

by Peter R. Breggin, M.D.

- On love for self and others
 - What is love?
 - Enjoying romantic love
 - Bodily sex and passion
 - Freedom versus love?
 - The fear of loving
 - Pursuing your self-interest

- On self-determination
 - Self-oppression — the key concept
 - Feelings of helplessness & fear
 - Supremacy of reason over emotion
 - Making insight work in your life
 - Personal freedom in everyday life
 - You own yourself

- On parents and children
 - Parenthood without force
 - Raising free & happy children
 - What parents owe children
 - What children owe parents
 - Origins of guilt & shame
 - Transcending your childhood

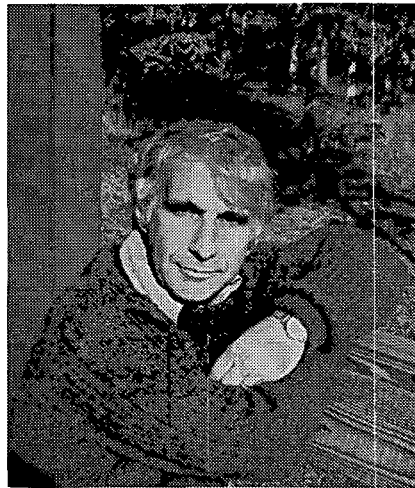
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Peter R. Breggin, M.D. is a psychiatrist in private practice in the Washington, D.C. area, and the author of five books and many articles dealing with psychiatry. Formerly a Teaching Fellow at Harvard Medical School and a fulltime Consultant with the National Institute of Mental Health, he is now Director of the Center for the Study of Psychiatry. Internationally known as America's leading critic of oppressive psychiatric technology, he now responds to the question, "What have you got to offer that's better?" His answer is a systematic, yet common sense presentation of the psychology of self-determination.

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Will Pac-Man End Western Civilization?

CLARK NORTON

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We survived flagpole sitters and rock-and-roll, but can we resist the onslaught of Pac-Man?

Reviving the American Century

MICHAEL T. KLARE

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Reagan's critics claim that he doesn't have a foreign policy. Alas, nothing could be further from the truth.

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Cover illustration by VINT LAWRENCE

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

THE CURRENT WAVE OF "Vietnam revisionism," typified by Norman Podhoretz's book which is reviewed in this issue, shouldn't be so surprising. Many of the fashionably liberal opponents of the Vietnam War, even those who now oppose American involvement in El Salvador, have never really been anti-interventionist at all. They just think we've been intervening on the wrong side. Without a moral framework for anti-interventionism, and without an analysis of why governments so often find war appealing, the question of whether or not to intervene becomes one of ad hoc cost-benefit calculation, and thus subject to second thoughts.

Vietnam revisionism has created a windfall for the Reagan administration, which, as Michael Klare's article shows, is rapidly restoring the interventionist paradigms of the 1960s. If, as has been said, war is the health of the state, then let us work to spread an epidemic of peace.

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RES PUBLICA

Smite Cap Weinberger and George Bush while you're at it

■ The president of Bob Jones University, in a rage of Old Testament proportions, has called upon God to smite Secretary of State Alexander Haig "hip and thigh, bone and marrow, heart and lungs."

Dr. Bob Jones III has revealed that he called down the curse upon Mr. Haig when he learned that the State Department had denied a visa to the Reverend Ian Paisley of Northern Ireland, who was to speak at the fundamentalist school.

The denial, he said, was "absolutely nothing but Catholic bigotry," and for good measure, he called Pope John Paul II a "perfect example of anti-Christ...."

Dr. Jones called Mr. Haig, a Catholic, a "tyrant of the worst sort, a monster in human flesh, and a demon-possessed instrument to destroy America."

—*Buffalo News*, April 4, 1982

Nude crime wave forces city to act

■ [The Eleventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals] that upheld the Cocoa Beach, Florida, law forbidding nude or seminude bar entertainment said it did so because the city's interest in reducing crime took precedence over "incidental" restrictions on the First Amendment.

—*Washington Post*, March 17, 1982

Three inches away from a mortal sin

■ An outspoken advocate of using the Bible as a supplemental classroom text has been reprimanded for peeping into a women's locker room, prompting him to withdraw from the race for an Iowa legislative seat....

[Law student Ian] Johnson said he couldn't estimate how long he had looked under the partition. He said he had "violated" his Christianity, even though he could only see as far up as the women's thighs.

—*San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 22, 1982

Ronald Reaganworld

■ The U.S. government is planning to build a second White House on a tract of land in Prince George's County [Maryland].

The county also will get its own Blair House and Lafayette Park, which will be built across from the new White House. But the new versions of the historic federal buildings will not have chandeliers, or even rooms.

They will be Hollywood-style façades...for use by the U.S. Secret Service to train new agents in the business of protecting the president and his guests....

The project...will cost the federal government \$1.6 million.... It is part of a \$10 million, ten-year project to expand the Secret Service's present training facilities....

—*Washington Post*, March 16, 1982



Nothing comes between me and my Calvins—except maybe the KGB

■ A leading Soviet newspaper recently laid it on the line: "Amerikanizirovaniy"—or the process of using American speech and dress—is not only offensive to all cultured Russians but borders on being downright unpatriotic....

The examples [the author] cites are only the tip of the iceberg: Kids buy "dzhins" in hopes they will have an American "laybl" like Levis or Lee. They check their "votch" to see whether it is time to call the "apartmyent" and "spikat" (speak) with "fazeryr" (father)....

[A] historian, V. Idayatov, said that raids should be conducted by Communist Youth Organization (Komsomol) activists, who would scoop down on the country's decadent youth decked out in ideologically hostile clothes.

—*San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle*, Feb. 21, 1982

Dracula's bombers

■ The United States spent \$2 million during World War II to develop the ultimate animal weapon—bats, attached to tiny incendiary bombs that were to be unleashed on Japan from airplanes....

The twenty-seven-month project was abandoned in 1944, but not before some of the bat bombardiers destroyed a general's automobile and buildings at a small California airport.

—*Los Angeles Times*, March 22, 1982

Do it! Do it!

■ "We've got to stop picking on the government. First of all, *we* created the government service. This nation created it. It's like the separation of church and state. It's an abiding thing there. It's part of the United States. It's like the Army and the Defense Department which are held in such reverence. It's there. It's part of what makes this whole thing go. Yet we've attacked it like it's a bastard child. If we don't stop this we'll be killing ourselves."

—A \$50,000-a-year federal employee dismissed in the reduction in force (RIF) cutbacks, quoted in the *Washington Post*, March 28, 1982

Word not yet in from Walt Whitman High School

■ The principal of Mark Twain Intermediate School in Fairfax County, Virginia, has recommended that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the classic American novel by Mark Twain, be removed from school's curriculum as racist.

—*Washington Post*, April 8, 1982

Uncle Sam, the ad man

■ State and local law-enforcement agencies would receive federal funds to help publicize the punishment imposed on convicted criminals, if legislation proposed by Senator Howell Heflin (D-Ala.) is enacted.

—*U.S. News & World Report*, March 15, 1982

■ The [California] legislature passed and sent to Governor Brown yesterday a controversial Republican-sponsored measure increasing taxes on beef up to \$5 million a year to finance advertising and promotion, in hopes of persuading Californians to eat more of it.

—*San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 22, 1982

Israel loses its head

West Bank blues

HIS CRIME WAS AN OUTRAGE TO EVERY decent Israeli, Jewish or Arab. On April 11, an Israeli soldier, armed with an automatic rifle, sprayed bullets through one of Islam's holiest shrines, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, killing or wounding more than ten Arab worshippers. Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin was quick to denounce the act of "a mentally ill man." But his words disguised a more troubling truth: that savage Easter morning attack would never have occurred had Israel's policy of colonial rule over East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and other occupied territories not fanned the flames of hatred between Arab and Jew. That the mosque attack was aberrant only in its severity was suggested by the *New York Times* account of the Israeli soldiers who dispersed the crowds gathered at the Dome: "Just before going, one of them, with a laugh, threw a tear gas grenade near the mosque, upwind of the main door. Smoke from the perfectly placed cannister blew into the mosque, and worshippers came out coughing

and wiping their eyes. One elderly man was carried to an ambulance. A few of the troops walked away laughing."

This casual callousness is a fact of life for Arabs who have suffered under Israeli military occupation for fifteen years now. In recent months the pressures of Israeli rule have become all the more painful. In November Israeli authorities closed the prestigious university at Bir Zeit and placed the entire administration and many faculty members and students under arrest, ostensibly for harboring PLO sympathies; a protest march by 100 faculty members and students from Hebrew University was to no avail. Later that month the Israeli military stepped up its campaign of collective punishment; in an orgy of destruction, troops dynamited houses of the families and relatives of West Bank residents suspected of opposing military rule. In December security forces raided a girls' school in Ramallah and arrested 200 students for raising a Palestinian flag. At the same time, army troops in the Gaza welded shut the doors of 200 Arab shops that had gone on strike after Israel levied a new value-added tax that violated the 1949 Geneva Accords regulating the conduct of occupying powers.

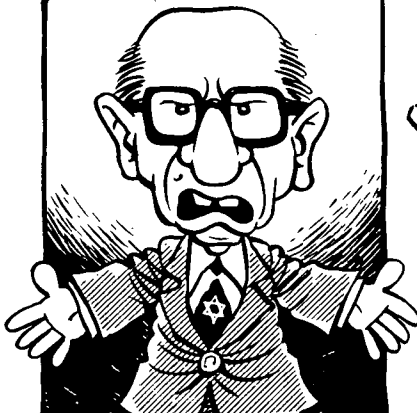
International law, of course, means nothing to Begin. "I do not accept the term 'occupation,'" he said last year. "We do not occupy anything that is foreign to us." He has always maintained that the occupied territories, with the exception of the Sinai, are part of the historical (Biblical) Land of Israel, to be colonized and annexed in due course. If the natives don't like it, they can be swept aside. As Begin's mentor, Vladimir Jabotinsky, put it, "Zionism is a

TRAVELER'S JOURNAL

SO WE HAVE TO
EXPUL A FEW
UNCOOPERATIVE
WEST BANK
MAYORS...BIG DEAL!



THE PALESTINIANS
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IDEALS!



UNDER OUR
AUTONOMY PLAN
THEY WILL
CONTINUE TO VOTE
FOR THEIR OWN
OFFICIALS...



UNTIL THEY
GET IT RIGHT!



colonizing adventure; therefore it stands or falls by the question of armed force."

The unarmed Arab residents of the West Bank are indeed being swept aside by force to make way for the Jewish state. Since 1977 Begin's administration has spent \$600 million to subsidize the development of new Jewish settlements—"facts on the ground" that will make it impossible for any future Israeli administration to turn the land back to its Arab inhabitants. The 25,000 settlers already in place have used the military to engage in wholesale expropriation of Arab lands—more than one-third of the territory is slated for their use. Israelis now draw off fully 90 percent of the water resources of the West Bank, without which the land is barren.

Israel claims that the only opposition to its occupation comes from a tiny handful of "terrorists" who stir up trouble on the West Bank. But the truth is different: The entire population is a hostage to the army. Meir Pail, a former Israeli general, has estimated that since 1967 some 20 percent of the West Bank population—virtually every adult male—has served time in an Israeli jail. Incoming Jewish settlers have turned Arab towns into armed camps. The settlers—many of them members of the ultranationalist Gush Emunim—patrol Arab towns, enforcing strict curfews, stopping passers-by at whim to check documents, harassing shopowners, and occasionally shooting up the town to intimidate the inhabitants. "It's a scary feeling to be at the mercy of armed lunatics," one Arab engineer told *Newsweek*. "If you complain about them, the Israelis laugh at you, and the Arab police are helpless. It's like being unarmed in a jungle."

It's no wonder, then, that Israel's peremptory decision in March to dismiss three of the West Bank's most popular mayors, a move seen by most Arab residents as an acceleration of Israel's policy of "creeping annexation," led to popular riots and the subsequent death or wounding of dozens of Arabs and Israeli soldiers. The crackdown served Begin's aim of defusing the right-wing opposition to his withdrawal from the Sinai, while advancing his plan to "consolidate Israel's control of the West Bank and Gaza strip," as one of his aides put it that month. But the resulting violence exposed to the world the realities of Israel's occupation. Perhaps the most poignant and telling incident came when an Israeli officer mocked one of the dismissed Arab mayors, Bassam Shakaa, whose legs had been blown off in 1980 by a bomb apparently planted by Israeli extremists. "You're half a man," the officer jeered. "I have lost my legs," Shakaa agreed, "but you Israelis have lost your heads."

The United States has no excuse for losing its head too. The cost of America's love affair with Israel has become all too clear: In the eyes of the world, we are complicit in the crimes of a state whose military power we subsidize so lavishly. When Alexander Haig spoke last year of "a permanent alliance between the U.S. and Israel," Begin seized on that affirmation as proof that America backed his expansionist policies, once again undercutting our claim that we support fair play and self-determination. The cost is in hard money as well; this year the Reagan administration plans to budget \$2.5 billion in military and economic aid for Israel, our largest beneficiary. If Israel ever had a claim on our sympathies and our purse, that time has passed. Just as civilized peoples cannot tolerate the violence and terror of religious extremists in Iran, so should they shun the zealots of the Holy Land.

Losing the war on dope

South Florida's police state

GEORGE BUSH WAS POSITIVELY BUBBLING with preppy enthusiasm. Who says he never gets to do anything important? Here his federal task force on drugs in South Florida had just made the biggest drug seizure in American history—some 3748 pounds of cocaine, worth perhaps \$870 million on the street—and even if they didn't make any arrests, it all proved the vice president was an important fellow, a can-do kind of guy. "This is encouraging news," Bush assured reporters. "... The task force is off to a good start, and I'm hopeful that future progress, while not as spectacular as this announcement, will continue for the benefit of the citizens of this area."

Federal officials in Miami shuffled and looked at their feet when they heard of Bush's proud claims. Heh heh, they mumbled, actually none of the extra manpower the federal task force had promised had arrived in Florida yet. In fact, the task force didn't have a damn thing to do with this seizure. It was just a routine customs check. But "our awareness has been heightened" by the task force, one official was quick to add.

Bush's empty boasts are typical of the federal war on drugs: tough talk with illusory results. Nowhere is it more evident than along the South Florida coast, where a veritable tidal wave of illegal drugs is threatening to swamp law enforcement. In 1980 police confiscated \$7.1 billion worth of cocaine and marijuana alone; the marijuana piled up so fast the cops began hauling it to Florida Power and Light Company to burn in its generators. At any given moment the sheriff's office in Key West is sitting on a \$4 million stash of evidence—a target so inviting that the sheriff's men do little except guard it; there's no time for patrolling the streets. The Miami police refuse to accept any drug cases from the U.S. Customs Service because they don't have any more room to store the seized drugs. The U.S. attorney's office has sixty-three full-time lawyers on staff, but the chief prosecutor says even if he refused to take any more cases it would take nine and a half years just to finish the ones already filed. Convicted drug dealers have so crammed Florida prisons that burglars, armed robbers, and the like are being turned loose to make room; paroles jumped 50 percent between 1978 and 1980.

The only way to make a dent in South Florida's drug trade would be to turn it into a garrison state—and unfortunately, that's just what the federal government is trying to do. Florida's congressional delegation has pushed through a law allowing civilian law enforcement to enlist U.S. military forces in their operations, which means that for the first time since 1878 the American military will be used against American citizens on a regular basis. Navy destroyers are now assigned to drug patrol along the Florida coast. Meanwhile, the FBI has been given jurisdiction in

drug cases—an authority that J. Edgar Hoover wisely resisted for years because he believed trying to enforce drug laws only led to corruption among police. Since the Drug Enforcement Administration still has jurisdiction in drug cases, it means we now have *two* national police forces chasing drug dealers. The Customs Service has reassigned one-quarter of its entire 2400-strong law enforcement division in Florida. Under the terms of the new law encouraging military cooperation with narcs, Customs has been loaned three Cobra gunship helicopters by the Army for use on obstreperous drug runners. And, of course, there's George Bush's task force that consists of him and six cabinet heads, which may not pose much of a threat to civil liberties but could drive the state of Florida collectively mad with its silly statements and press releases.

All of this will make Florida a very unpleasant place to live for the average citizen, who will have to endure a vastly increased incidence of petty harassment, unprovoked searches, brutal arrests, and "accidental" shootings—all of which inevitably accompany legal crackdowns where police are given carte blanche to go after a particular class of criminals, real or imagined. But it won't significantly reduce the drug trade, because there's too much money in it. The cops are the first to admit it. "You know what would happen if we really did our job here?" asks Jim Dingfelder, a spokesman for U.S. Customs. "I'll tell you what would happen. If we were 100 percent effective, we would so drastically affect the economy that *we* would become the villains." He's right; drugs long ago replaced tourism and the citrus crop as the bedrock of Florida's economy. One federal study showed that in 1977 some three-fourths of the Federal Reserve currency in the whole United States was deposited in Florida banks. By making drugs illegal and then enthusiastically enforcing the prohibition, the government has paradoxically made trade in drugs irresistibly lucrative. Frustrated prosecutors have recently begun asking judges to set bail for large drug dealers at \$10 million, because at the going rate of \$1 million most of them were simply putting up the cash and walking away, never to be seen again.

There might be some wry humor in this situation, but Florida proves that drug enforcement creates some deadly serious problems—like crime. Since drug dealers have no recourse to the legal system when ripped off or otherwise abused, they pursue a personal form of redress with lethal results. Miami is America's most homicidal city, and in 1980 nearly one-quarter of the murders there were committed with machine guns, a sign that something is involved beyond your ordinary domestic spat. Meanwhile, as the criminal justice system is stretched to its limits by drug-related cases, there are no resources left to devote to real crime. Seven of America's eleven most crime-ridden cities are in Florida. In Miami the corpses pile up so fast that the Dade County coroner's office has rented a refrigerated truck to ease overcrowding in the morgue.

Sending in the Marines, or even George Bush, will not save Florida. Turning the state into a vast prison camp is not going to make the drug trade less profitable or less deadly. What *will* work is for us to finally admit that our seven-decade experiment in trying to control what substances people put into their bodies has failed, and to call a halt to it—right now, before we spend another nickle of tax money, before we clap another dealer in jail, before another machine gun roars on the streets of Miami. We have seen the future, and it is South Florida.

Sellout to the Third World

Torpedo the Law of the Sea

ON APRIL 6, 1982, THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION ran up the white flag of surrender to the Third World in the yearlong battle over the Law of the Sea Treaty negotiations. The current negotiations, under way since the Nixon years, have produced a draft treaty, championed by the Third World, that would resurrect mercantilism on a global scale, creating an international cartel to control the development of all mineral resources in the ocean seabed beyond territorial jurisdictions.

And this is what the Reagan administration agreed to in principle last month when it accepted the Third World's demand for production limitations on seabed mining. U.S. negotiators tried to play down the importance of the caveat. Their press officer told *INQUIRY* that the production limitations are "perfunctory" and simply "don't bite"; since "market forces" determine the price of minerals anyway, our agreement to production controls was simply conceding a nonissue.

Sorry, but it simply won't wash. It is economic lunacy to suggest that production limitations will not affect prices. If the limitations are really perfunctory and "don't bite," then why was the United States trying to secure priority rights on mining contracts for the four U.S.-dominated consortia that were pioneers in seabed mining? Under a U.S. proposal, Japan and the Soviet Union, both latecomers to seabed mining, would be given only a second priority for mining contracts. Both Japan and the Soviets objected strongly and not only for reasons of national pride. They rightly feared that the first-priority contracts might use up all the production allowed under the treaty limitations.

In the early days of the Reagan administration, the president courageously and properly dismissed the entire American delegation to the sea-treaty talks ("as if it had done something disgraceful," sniffed the *New York Times* editorially) and said the United States wasn't going to sign the treaty as it was then constituted. Despite grumbling and threats of signing the treaty without the United States, the Third World backed down and agreed to what was, in essence, a year's postponement in the talks, to give the Reagan administration an opportunity to formulate a new U.S. position.

Since then, however, the United States has abandoned its principles in exchange for an attempt to guarantee preferential rights for the four U.S. mining consortia for the next twenty years. This is precisely what we warned against in these pages last summer ["Battle of the Seabed," *INQUIRY*, July 6 & 20, 1981]:

It is not the State Department's duty here to negotiate enough procedural safeguards in the UNCLOS treaty to guarantee the existing seabed mining consortia an adequate short-term return on their investment while mortgaging the future of seabed mining to majority control. That would be a

sellout to business interests and would be wrong. . . . A principle is involved here that should not be compromised: The "common heritage of mankind" ought to be just that—mankind, not a group of nation-states, nor an international bureaucracy, no matter how many procedural safeguards are written into the regulations to protect current business investment.

What Reagan has accomplished by his surrender on production controls is to give unwarranted credence to Third World views such as those expressed by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar: "A just and equitable international order demands sacrifices and concessions from everyone, but particularly those who are best placed to derive immediate benefits from new uses of the seas." Beware of Third World diplomats who speak of "sacrifices" because they always involve someone other than them. As William Safire recently wrote in an essay in the *New York Times* on "Reagan's Sea Treaty Sellout":

In return for their hard work inhibiting competition and driving up world inflation, Third World diplomats envision a bonanza from their supranational authority: lifetime jobs, highrise offices, limousines, elite schools for their children, studies farmed out to friendly academics, everything a potato-shaped manganese nodule can bestow. Best of all, no control of their budget from individual nations, because the cartel bureaucracy would fix world prices to its profit.

What is at stake here is a principle—affirming free trade and rejecting monopolistic cartels—and a maxim—those who don't play the game won't make the rules. We can achieve both if there are thirty-four senators who possess the intellectual courage to vote "No" on ratification when the Law of the Sea Treaty is presented to them. □

SHORT TAKES

World's farce

AT THE RISK OF BEING LABELED SMUG, elitist city slickers, we nevertheless must fearlessly expose the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee, for what it is—a scam and a humbug. More precisely, it is a lesson in microcosm that government welfare and subsidies are intentionally and inevitably directed toward helping the wealthy and well-connected at the expense of the poor and powerless. In the same way that subsidies, for example, helped developers more than tenants, the \$43 million in federal subsidies to the Knoxville Fair have richly blessed East Tennessee hotel-owners, developers, and such bankers as the attractively named Jake Butcher, who also happens to be a pinwheel of Tennessee politics and a friend of former Carter budget director Bert Lance. (The \$43 million figure doesn't include the additional \$21 million needed to construct and operate the U.S. pavilion at the fair—which, if we all want to travel to Knoxville and buy a \$9.95 admission ticket, we would get to see.) Not that the feds are footing the entire bill; the taxpayers of Knoxville will be stuck with a \$300,000 annual municipal bond debt, which should be good news to anyone in a position to invest in Knoxville municipal bonds.

Naturally, all this money shuffling is being done in the name of boosting the economy and creating jobs. Look for the 1983 World's Fair to be held in South Succotash.

■ **IT IS A RARE THING WHEN A POLITICIAN** proposes a new amendment to the Constitution that is not ridiculous, restrictive, or both. So it caught our eye in April when Senator Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) called for an amendment that would extend all the First Amendment rights the press has to all forms of telecommunications—radio, television, and electronic publishing. "We must take the regulation of freedom of expression away from the government," Packwood said. He argued that the Federal Communications Commission's policies of deregulation do not go far enough in repealing government programming restrictions. With newspapers using satellites to transmit their print, Packwood claims there is a danger that the FCC—which has the authority to regulate satellite transmissions—might eventually censor newspapers.

Packwood's amendment would in one sweep abolish all the government rules that affect broadcasting, including the spurious "fairness doctrine" and licensing requirements. "Free expression . . . cannot be free when government assumes for itself, or is granted, the power to regulate . . . in the name of technical necessity," he said. We couldn't have put it better ourselves.

■ **FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, UNTIL THE** practice was discredited, doctors treated sick patients by bleeding them. Now, legislative leeches in twenty-one states are reviving the practice by attempting to regulate industrial plant closings. An ailing company in one of these states would not be permitted to shut down its operation without first paying heavy severance to its workers and severance to the state and local governments to compensate for lost tax revenue.

Even the governor of Michigan, one of the hardest-hit states, sees the lunacy of these schemes. "We can't attract new jobs by imposing such restrictions," he said, and he's absolutely right. What company, healthy or not, would open a new plant in a state with severance requirements? And when the ailing plant finally closes, and the severance taxes are finally paid, where are the workers going to find new jobs?

Industrial losers can't be turned into winners by legislative fiat. Severance schemes do little for workers in the short run and actually do harm to them in the long run—but they succeed admirably in bleeding the treasuries of sick companies into the government's purse.

■ **THE BORN-AGAIN ANGLOPHILES TO THE** contrary, not enough has been made of President Reagan's comment on the Falklands flap to the effect that both Britain and Argentina are our "good friends." Well, actually, they're a bit more than that, since the United States has mutual defense treaties with both. A few weeks ago we entertained visions of U.S. military forces honoring these obligations by attacking both countries, and perhaps reducing both to rubble as a clear lesson to would-be aggressors that our alliances are not to be taken lightly. We're happy to note that the same visions did not occur to Alexander Haig. □

LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to *INQUIRY* Magazine, 1320 G Street S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for length when necessary.

The Agent White menace

I APPLAUD YOUR PUBLICATION of the truth about Agent White [March 15]. As one who has been involved in the struggle to prevent our water and bodies from being polluted and corrupted with this cancer- and birth-defect-causing chemical agent, I would like to share some related and additional information concerning the Multiflora Rose Control Program. This "War of the Roses" is poisoning plants and people throughout the Appalachian watersheds, with tax dollars. As many as 20 million Americans have been poisoned already; this is far more serious than Agent Orange usage in Vietnam, as it is happening *here*, to as many women as men, and on a massive scale in a continuing program.

The USDA claims no environmental-impact statement is needed, and they won't file one. I can hardly blame them for not wanting to discuss this crime. And the USDA also refuses to study the effects of previous usage before continuing.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, which funds part of the costs of this war on our own people, has been killed by the Reagan administration. ARC had been supposed to help alleviate the area's poverty, unemployment, and general depression. So ARC funded this mass poisoning with Agent White as a labor-saving solution (to the nonproblem of multiflora roses) in an area of ghetto-level unemployment. The primary beneficiaries of this tax money were Dow Chemical Company and the wealthiest landowners. Socialism for the rich; cancer and birth defects for the poor taxpayer. While the good ARC did is interred, residual funds have been found to keep this obscenity going.

We need an aggressive, dedicated attorney to advise us how to cut through the kangaroo-court treatment

our legal actions have encountered. It seems to us that there is the basis for a class-action damage suit of astronomical proportions.

R. ALAN FONDA
Andrews, N.C.



Don't be cruel

I HAVE RARELY BEEN SO DISGUSTED as I was when I read Thomas Szasz's review of Albert Goldman's book *Elvis* in your April 12 issue. What on earth could have possessed Szasz to call this a "brilliant, biting" book? It's sleazy psychobiographical hoodoo, precisely the sort of thing Szasz has been denouncing for years. But Szasz seems to have one standard for books he agrees with, and another for those he dislikes.

How can Szasz praise a book which primarily interprets a man's art in terms of his urinary and sexual habits? That is exactly what *Elvis* does. In fact, it goes so far as to say that much of Presley's life can be explained by the fact—I am not kidding—that Elvis had an ugly penis and was "ashamed" of it. "Like most country boys of his time, he was uncircumcised," Goldman writes. "A sensitive adolescent at heart, he saw his beauty disfigured by an ugly hillbilly pecker." Later he speculates that Elvis liked to watch stag films because they typically starred "a hefty older woman of a type that Elvis could easily have associated

unconsciously with [his mother]. . . . Nothing is more basic to a mamma's boy than deeply buried hatred for the woman who has enslaved him and frustrated him and imprisoned him psychologically for a lifetime, including all the years after her death." And later still Goldman speculates, without any evidence, that Presley was "latently or actively homosexual."

Would Szasz call a book touting such bilge about, say, Chaucer "brilliant" and "biting"? I think not. Indeed, would *INQUIRY* assign Szasz to review a biography of Chaucer unless there were some evidence that Szasz was familiar with and appreciated his work? Again, I think not. Yet to many of us Presley's cultural contributions are at least as important as Chaucer's. To review such a sick piece of literature as *Elvis*, and to make no comment on what it has to say about Presley's work or place in American society, is utterly irresponsible. For years popular culture has been conspicuous in *INQUIRY* only by its absence. Now you choose to attack this culture, relying on those who neither understand nor participate in it as proper judges. I expected more from you.

NANCY BAUER
Foster City, Calif.

Take that, Nancy Bauer

I AM A RETIRED NEWSPAPERMAN and longtime *INQUIRY* reader. For the past couple of years I've been making notes to myself that I should write you people. Somehow or other I just never got to it. I'm an inveterate magazine reader and I put yours at the top of the pack. On occasion I disagree with something you write, but not too often. I've never found any publication that comes as close to expressing my views as does *INQUIRY*.

The only suggestion I can think of at the moment is that you give a bit more space to your letters column. And now and then you might even use one that is not too critical. You must have some people who like the book, and who tell you.

FRANK CREHAN
Scottsdale, Ariz.

A HILL OF BEANS

GLENN GARVIN

Falklands, by jingo

EVEN WHEN THEY ARE right, the British have a way of stating their case in terms so repellent that reasonable men find themselves strangely tempted to side with the forces of tyranny and aggression. The Falkland Islands crisis has proved no exception; the Brits and their Anglophile henchmen in the American media have filled the air with calls to empire so infuriating that Argentina—the land of the midnight knock—begins to sound like a voice of reason.

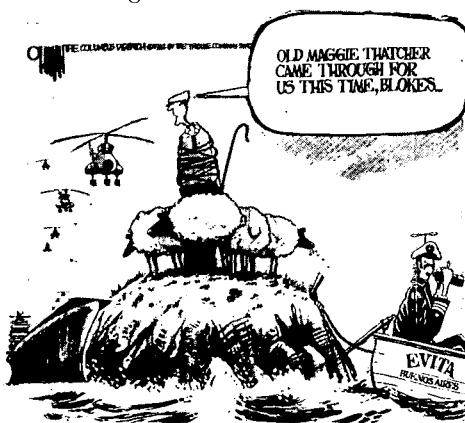
Even during World War II, Churchill could not content himself with pointing out the obvious evils of the Nazis. Ultimately, it was not that the Germans were butchers that made it imperative that the British resist, or even that they enslaved the rest of Europe. No, Churchill said, the war was necessary because Hitler was challenging England's God-given right to rule whichever portions of the earth it chose. "I have not become the King's first minister," he sternly instructed the House of Commons, "in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

It is one of the more felicitous circumstances of our time that little remains of either the Third Reich or the British Empire, but somehow a couple of the fragments have collided in the South Atlantic. And still the British justify their cause in terms of empire.

"I feel the stirrings of empire in my blood today as I had not expected to feel them again since the fiasco of the Anglo-French adventure at Suez," writes Henry Fairlie. "The symbols

are vivid and powerful. . . . Perhaps English sailors will now scour the Spanish Main again to hunt down the Spanish-speaking foe." He quite fashionably derides Americans as "nerveless" for their failure to see the attraction of a good bloody fight, and adds: "There is a call to the service of the empire which no Briton will in his heart find it easy to resist. That this seems comic to the Americans, who in the past two decades have shown themselves singularly inept at conducting any military operation anywhere in the world, is a mockery which we must bear."

Then there's David Broder, who marvels at how exciting and martial great armadas are and praises the Brits as people who "can be counted on to handle the Falklands crisis in style. Bravo, Britain!" And Mary McGrory, who thinks the British Empire less than a blessing to her ancestral home of Ireland, is of a different mind when it comes to teaching these Argentine swine a lesson. "I



watched the departure of the British fleet from Portsmouth with disbelief," she recounted. ". . . In the course of weeping and cheering with the throng on the dock, I made an astonishing discovery: I am not really a dove. All during Vietnam, I screeched for negotiations. But as I watched the *Invincible* cutting the waters, I said, 'Bash them.'"

Bash them: now there's a civilized sentiment. There is nothing noble about what the Argentines have done in the Falkland Islands. But there will be nothing noble about British boys

coming home in coffins, either, or Argentine boys dying in mute agony beneath the icy waters of the South Atlantic. War is an ugly calling in the best of circumstances, and on behalf of a vanquished and vanished empire it is criminal. Fairlie, McGrory, and the rest of the buglers for this modern-day Light Brigade would do well to look up the obituary that the *London Times* ran when Anthony Eden, the prime minister who presided over the disastrous British adventure in the Suez in 1956, died five years ago. "He was the last prime minister to believe Britain was a great power," said the *Times*, "and the first to confront a crisis which proved she was not."

AS FOR US NERVELESS Americans, we must be thankful that the mighty engines of our federal government continue to roar forward even while Al Haig is out of the country trying to keep our various allies from turning one another into bleeding cinders. The latest evidence of the chaos that would surely result if we had to live without government is the revelation that there would have been no celebration of National Condom Week in Washington were it not for federal assistance.

The highlight of this weeklong celebration was something called "Rubber Disco," which Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington—the sponsoring agency—described as follows:

This fabulous dance will be held at the Beret Discotheque, decorated with a rainbow of different-colored, blown-up condoms. The height of festivities will culminate with a condom-blowing contest, the winner of which is to receive a prize of \$35.

The theme of this little shindig, which was produced with some portion of a \$161,000 federal grant to Planned Parenthood, was "Help Make Washington Safe For Loving," which seems oddly anomalous since Washington isn't safe for anything else. When Representative Robert Walker of Pennsylvania, a regular troll under life's Bridge of Joy, gave a rather cranky speech about all this, the folks at Planned Parenthood were astonished. "We've had this event for years," said one, "and nobody ever complained about it before." No word yet on what this means for National Diaphragm Week.

Glenn Garvin is the editor of *INQUIRY*. His column, like his symptoms of beri-beri, appears erratically.

JERE REAL

Gore Vidal, Roman senator

As usual, I am ambivalent. On the one hand, I am intellectually devoted to the idea of the old America. I believe in justice, I want redress for all wrongs done, I want the good life—if such a thing exists—accessible to all. Yet, emotionally, I would be only too happy to become world dictator, if only to fulfill my mission: the destruction of the last vestigial traces of traditional manhood in the race in order to realign the sexes, thus reducing population while increasing human happiness and preparing humanity for its next stage.

—Myra Breckinridge

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA, might seem an odd place to give a campaign speech for a U.S. Senate seat from California. But then, Gore Vidal's candidacy is anything but conventional. His qualifications for the job include the fact that he has lived most of the last two decades in Italy rather than California; that he authored a wild, polysexual novel of which the main point, the *Times Literary Supplement* said, was "the reductio ad absurdum of the genitalia"; and that William F. Buckley once called him "you queer" on network television and threatened to "sock you in the goddamn face." Vidal himself would seem to have little taste for electoral politics. "Most Americans," he once explained, "are liars or crooks if they can get away with it, in exactly the same niggling way that Nixon was. So I think he reflected in many ways a majority of the electorate."

Nevertheless, there he was: Gore

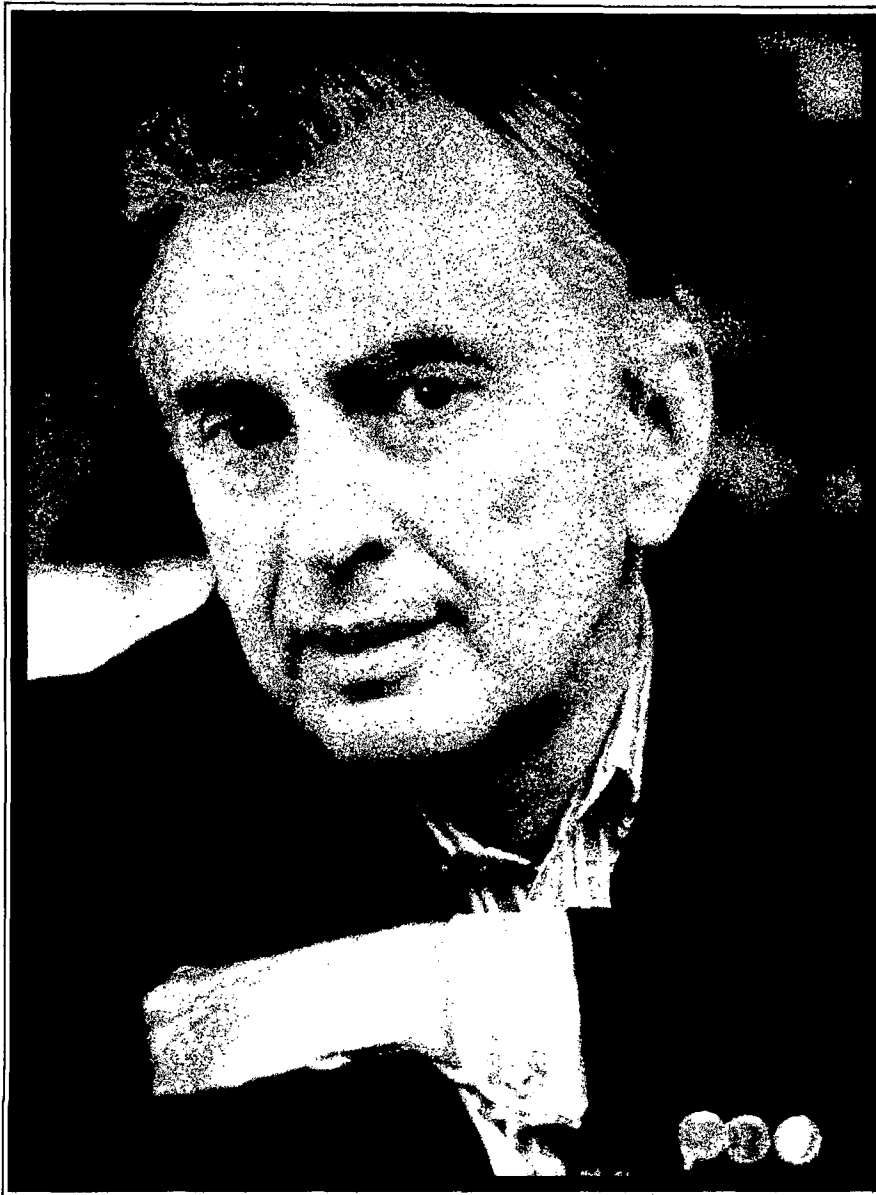
Vidal, novelist, playwright, critic, and now quixotic challenger to Jerry Brown for the Democratic nomination for a Senate seat soon to be vacated by S. I. Hayakawa. As the applause swelled and broke, he strode energetically to the podium at tiny Lynchburg College to rattle the bars of the city's nearby evangelical zoo, the national headquarters of the Moral Majority.

Perhaps the idea of a campaign appearance 2500 miles from the nearest eligible voter wasn't so strange. There is a certain theatrical quality, these days, to visiting Lynchburg, and Vidal is hardly the first politician to have grasped the possibilities. George McGovern, Jerry Ford, Sam Brown, they all come: some to praise Jerry Falwell, some to bury him. Either way, it makes good copy. The highest drama, or lowest comedy, was provided by Elizabeth Taylor a

short time ago, when the occasional Mrs. John Warner sat in the pews where Falwell has so often preached about the ideal marriage: "One man for one woman for one lifetime." It was a scene that would have delighted Vidal's film cultress, Myra Breckinridge. "Cleopatra meets Elmer Gantry," she would have called it.

But none of them could quite match Vidal, who after all has done so many television talk shows that he says most Americans think of him as "a piece of furniture in their homes." And from his opening line it was clear Vidal was in top form. "I usually like to start with a prayer," he said with a sardonic flicker of a smile tugging at the sides of his mouth. "But instead, I'll start with the very latest Nancy Reagan joke.

"When she heard that a compassionate government had decided to give all that cheese to the poor, she



JERE REAL is a free-lance journalist and formerly an editorial-page writer for the Richmond News Leader.

thought a moment, and she said: 'Good. Let them eat quiche.'

Having taken on God and Nancy Reagan in the first thirty seconds of his speech, Vidal quickly gave short shrift to what he waspishly referred to as the local "monotheists." Reverend Falwell "was out of style" for Virginia, said Vidal, possibly even "ungentlemanly"; Falwell should simply be seen as "banker for Our Lord." After a dramatist's two-beat pause, Vidal added the kicker: "... which is honorable service, I'm sure." Mark Antony, an earlier Roman, did not deliver better.

That ironical detachment about nearly every aspect of American political life is, of course, vintage Vidal. It has been honed, like an old-fashioned straight razor, for the past sixteen years as Vidal viewed his native land from his cliffside villa in Italy. It is confusing. Why would a man who hasn't even voted in a presidential election since 1964 (when he voted for LBJ over Goldwater), suddenly feel a clarion call to the Senate? His answer is blunt: "The country is in a bad way." In his speech, he expounds further. "Schools are being shut down. Something like 50,000 businesses went bust last year. The city streets are a battleground. We have 10 million unemployed. The professional politician has no answer to any of these problems because he is part of the problem."

That leads Vidal to his great notion—that the United States is run by a single party with two factions, Democrats and Republicans. "This division," he explains, "is supposed to give us a sense of choice at election time, like Painkiller X and Painkiller Y... when we know that both are aspirin." The one-party system is the creation of "those great financial interests" that have been governing the country "off and on, mostly on," since 1786.

The idea is not original with Vidal. The single-party idea has been periodically put forth from both far left and far right. In fact, Vidal's words seem a more elegant echo of Governor George Wallace's oft-repeated statement that "there's not a dime's worth of difference between the Democrats and the Republicans." It is a comparison from which Vidal does not shy. "Wallace was on to something with that statement of his," Vidal confided over late-night drinks. Vidal, perhaps, sees the results of such one-party government a bit differently than Wal-

lace. He believes it will bring ever more massive military expenditures ("the budget of the Pentagon will continue to expand because of whatever enemy the enemy-of-the-month club has selected for us") and a bankrupt economy ("taxes and inflation will continue to increase while real income decreases... the poor will get poorer, the rich will get richer, and the middle class—which is the country—will continue to carry the great burden of taxation").

The proposal by President Reagan ("in the great springtime of his senility") of a \$1.6 trillion defense budget over the next five years can only lead us to nuclear war or national bankruptcy, Vidal argues. He says the seeds of this destruction were sown during a national hubris that began after World War II, "when, if ever a nation were on top of the world, it was us." The decision to play the world's policeman—and supply ourselves and our allies with armaments—was, Vidal believes, our tragic flaw. As one who has spent a literary lifetime studying the growth of the American empire (in *Burr* and 1876) and the decline of past empires (in *Julian*), the writer puts his case succinctly: "We have neither the intelligence nor the wealth to govern the world." His vision of America's destiny if such militaristic aims were abandoned? "We could repair and

commitment to NATO. That is a burden that should be undertaken by our allies "who are now much richer and more populous than we are."

It is at these times, when Vidal speaks of the dangers of militarism and the horrors of war, that he is at his most eloquent. It is probably no exaggeration to say that he is the most sensibly pacifist candidate on the ballot anywhere in the June primaries. "Reagan and the Bel-Air Crusaders have decided there must be a war somewhere," Vidal told a college crowd in San Francisco last month. "The administration knows war is good for the economy; it doesn't matter where it takes place to them as long as Boeing and Lockheed stay in business.... If we really knew our history we would not have allowed ourselves to become so misgoverned and exploited. Like empires of the past, we have divided and conquered, humiliated and alienated countries all over the world." Reagan's foreign policy, he added, continues to maintain a "parity of murder" with the Soviets: "I sometimes get the strange sensation that I'm living in an occupied country." Unlike so many leftists, however, Vidal does not keep two sets of books when it comes to anti-interventionist sentiment. "What do you think about our policy toward South Africa?" asked a black woman

The decision to play the world's policeman—and supply ourselves and our allies with arms—was, Vidal believes, our tragic flaw.

perfect our own country and be what we were intended to be, a great commercial power in the world." In effect, Gore Vidal seems to be suggesting that the United States could be a giant Switzerland. Better that than to become involved, as he thinks we soon will be, in a war in Angola, Nicaragua, or El Salvador. He mocks Reagan's modern-day domino theory: "I myself sit up at night worrying about hordes of El Salvadorans in Greyhound buses crossing the border, getting lost on the freeways. I can't sleep for fear they'll be on the march." He proposes an immediate 25 percent cut in the Pentagon budget and further suggests that the United States seriously consider ending its annual \$83 billion a year

sitting in the front row during his San Francisco speech. "There does not seem to be much we can do about it," he answered gently (although a tinge of limousine liberalism did seem to creep in when he added that "I've made sure none of my plays appears there").

VIDAL IS SCARCELY LESS passionate when discussing government intervention at home—in our sex lives. He gets a standing ovation at every stop when he tells the audience: "I know this is a brand new thought in a free country, but let's think about it anyway: The time has come for us to get government off our fronts!" As the roars fade,

he continues. "Fifty percent of all police work is concerned with victimless crimes—everything from gambling to suicide. Suppose we directed all the police work centered on solving victimless crimes to solving crimes with victims—our crime rate would be greatly reduced and our lives and deaths would once again be up to us to control."

Much of Vidal's life's work has been spent examining—and often attempting to erase—the thin lines between sexual identities. He was one of the first American writers sympathetically to explore homosexual themes; and in *Myra Breckinridge* he took sexual ambiguity to its outermost limits in a story about a homosexual man who becomes a woman, falls in love with another woman, and then becomes a man again. Yet, curiously, he has attracted little support in California's burgeoning gay community. The *Advocate*, the premiere gay newspaper, has even endorsed Jerry Brown. The problem is apparently Vidal's insistence that he is bisexual and his ridicule of the notion of a "gay sensibility." But Vidal won't budge. At a meeting of gay movers-and-shakers in Los Angeles, he flatly insisted that "it is fact, not theory, that everyone is bisexual, just as everyone has two lobes in the brain. To have an interest in both sexes is *normal* . . . I am all for resistance to the heterosexual dictatorship, overthrow of the heterosexual dictatorship. That appeals to my sense of justice and my warrior spirit. But to pretend that the fact that a number of men and women who prefer same-sex to other-sex have anything in common beyond that preference goes against all the evidence."

That argument didn't win him any friends. And despite the way he can drive crowds crazy, despite the huge outpouring of volunteers his announcement of candidacy prompted (one Democratic party official said "it was like a repetition of the day that Ted Kennedy announced his candidacy for president"), Vidal's campaign has serious problems. One is money. Another is the candidate himself, whose wry wit gets him into trouble. Last month, for instance, he floored reporters when—in answer to a question about Mexican immigration—a deadpan Vidal said it was inevitable that the United States would invade Mexico and take its oil. Later he had to explain to newsmen that it had all been a joke.

Perhaps the most serious drawback to Vidal's candidacy is that his knowledge of economics is about what one might expect from a man who thinks that John Kenneth Galbraith is "the greatest living economist." At first it sounds as though he might have some surprises; he says that the IRS "is an extortion racket that could have taught the Gestapo a trick or two,"

of four, the fact is that he trails Brown by 57 percent to 10 percent.

Vidal is probably not surprised. He once said that "the average American voter is forty-seven, blue collar, white, intensely racist, perfectly ignorant of politics . . . and what little he knows of the Bill of Rights he doesn't like." (And of the word "normal," he wrote, it "conjures up vigorous Minutemen

Much of Vidal's lifework has been spent examining—and often trying to erase—the thin line that he says separates sexual identities.

and that the graduated income tax is "tyrannous." But he wants to expand social programs and doesn't seem to understand that high taxes and government regulation have created many of the problems that the programs try—and fail—to alleviate. He proposes to fund an expanded welfare state with a flat 10 to 12 percent tax on the adjusted gross incomes of all corporations and a flat 5 percent tax on most individual incomes. With a lack of evidence and a sweet certainty that would make any supply-side economist proud, Vidal insists that these taxes would generate more than enough income to cover the federal budget at its current level.

That projection appears to have been conjured out of thin air, in much the same fashion as Vidal's recent claim on National Public Radio that "the corporations, since Reagan is in, now pay no tax at all, no tax at all, no tax at all. The top 400 in *Fortune* magazine pay no tax at all. This is astonishing." What's *really* astonishing, as veteran conservative hitman John D. Lofton recently noted, is that Vidal could so casually say something that is so completely untrue. Corporations paid \$61 billion in federal taxes last year, and the Office of Management and Budget estimates they'll pay another \$284 billion between 1982 and 1985.

WHETHER IT IS VIDAL'S lack of money, or lack of economic expertise, or simply Jerry Brown's incumbency and superior organization, Vidal trails badly in the polls. Although his aides make much of the fact that an April survey showed him running second in a field

with rifles shooting commies, while their wives and little ones stay home stitching hoods.") With such a view of the electorate, you wonder why he's running.

On another occasion, in 1961, he offered a less hysterical view of American politics:

An American politician in the mid-twentieth century must conform to certain conventions. He must be gregarious (or seem to be), candid (but never give the game away), curious about people (otherwise, he would find his work unendurable). An American politician must not seem too brainy. He must put on no airs. He must smile often but at the same time appear serious. . . . Above all, a politician must not sound clever or wise or proud.

Obviously, Vidal meets his first three challenges, but one can only wonder if he can cope with the rest of his own list of qualifications. In the 1952 campaign between Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson, Eisenhower said, in a somewhat incredulous tone (which Vidal can imitate to perfection), that "if elected, I shall go to Korea." Stevenson retorted to the press with considerable wit, "If elected I shall go to Washington." It was a good line, but it did not go down well with the public. Adlai, for all his wit, was perceived by many as frivolous.

Perhaps the voting public has changed greatly since 1961. Or perhaps Gore Vidal can himself change and not sound brainy, clever, wise, or proud. His theme of the risk of nuclear war could be a potent appeal, particularly if recent antinuclear proclamations, rallies, and demonstrations around the country are an accurate gauge of popular opinion. In 1961, Vidal's futuristic novel *Messiah* gave a terrifying vision of the United States

(and eventually all of Western civilization) caught up in a religious-political movement based on the acceptance of death. The movement was small at first, but later gained both its national following and its political clout through the use of television. The protagonist—named Eugene Luther (as was Vidal before he took the name of his grandfather, Senator Thomas Gore)—was pursued to Egypt by death squads of the new regime. In the book's key scene, Luther broke with the new cult he helped found because of its emphasis of death *over* life. Having initially rid man of his fear of dying, the group had moved to institutionalize death as a new religion. Luther argued that "life is to be lived until the flesh no longer supports the life within. The meaning of life . . . is more life, not death." Darkly hinting at a nuclear holocaust, Vidal's stump speech quotes Bertrand Russell in a similar key: "We have to stand out against this hysteria and realize, and make others realize, that life, not death—no matter how heroic—is the source of all good."

While covering the 1968 Republican convention, Vidal explained Ronald Reagan's political appeal and success as the result of television imagery. He sees himself, with some justice, as equally telegenic. At fifty-seven, his hair turning senatorially gray, Vidal looks every inch a political father figure. He has said his profile is that of a late Roman emperor, one of the "minor" ones. Myra Breckinridge would place him somewhere between Louis Calhern in MGM's *Julius Caesar* and Spencer Tracy in *Judgment at Nuremberg*. His profile does have that graven-image quality, the sort one expects to find on a coin, or, these days, a postage stamp. The imperial style is there—even for one who decries empire. And with Vidal, one may get about as much substance, perhaps a bit more, as voters reasonably may expect from any politician today.

Like Vidal's Myra, one begins to think, too, in movie images. Back in 1964, Vidal played the part of a U.S. senator in the film version of his own play about a presidential convention, *The Best Man*. He once wrote that "the politician must have that instinctive sense for occasion which is also the actor's art." Having played that part on the screen, he now seeks to act it in reality, vindicating Oscar Wilde once and for all by proving that life *can* imitate art. □

CORPORATE STATE

RON PAUL

Hide and seek at the Energy Department

THE EXTRAORDINARY MEDIA coverage of recent events in Poland has helped to remind us, by contrast, of the blessings of personal liberty and the abundance made possible by the free market. In Poland, people stand in line for bread, for meat, and for all the necessities of life—when they are available; millions of Poles are seriously malnourished. Perhaps the most vivid and telling image we have of Poland is that of the people in those endless lines, crushed in spirit and meekly accepting an oppressive, hopelessly inefficient, and demoralizing way of life.

The "command economy," developed in Stalin's Russia, is the system in force in Poland today. It is a system which outlaws free exchanges between individuals in the marketplace, and instead allocates scarce resources and distributes scarce goods through the decisions of bureaucrats. Of course, for those with political or military status, there are no lines and no shortages—special stores of the choicest goods are set aside for these elites. While the common man waits in line, party officials enjoy splendid dachas on the Black Sea, and Communist Party Chairman Brezhnev even has a collection of Western luxury cars.

Aren't we lucky not to live in such a place! Certainly, Americans would never accept the sort of regimentation and abuse of personal liberty practiced in these Eastern despotisms—or would they?

In the United States we profess de-

RON PAUL is a Republican congressman representing a district just outside Houston, Texas.

votion to the rights of individuals, and we pride ourselves on the productivity of our market system. But there are parts of our economy that often seem disturbingly like Poland's, where bureaucrats can and do order the rest of us around like so many drones. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the area of energy. Government controls on natural gas and energy prices have produced shortages. In response to the shortages, the federal government did not lift the harmful controls for years, but rather, it added coercive allocation schemes that would have been comical were it not for their dire consequences.

Just as in Poland, energy price controls have led to shortages, and the shortages have led to coercive government controls, in 1974 and again in 1979. Just as in Eastern Europe, government controls meant that the people without special political status were forced to wait in lines. Minimum gas purchases, odd-even days, maximum hours, and weekend closings—all of these were added to price controls and bureaucratic misallocation, and all of these served only to maximize inconvenience. Shortages in cities coexisted with surpluses in rural areas, but to reallocate the supplies would have broken the law.

While the plebeians suffered, however, the politically powerful took care of themselves. Congress set aside special gasoline supplies for its fleet of VIP limousines. No matter how long an ordinary citizen might spend in line, at least he would never be stuck behind Tip O'Neill.

Had the price mechanism been allowed to operate freely, there would have been no energy shortages in 1974 and 1979; supply and demand would have adjusted, distribution would have been efficient, and there would have been no need for the coercion and manipulation of individuals by the state. The terrible lesson of the energy "crises" of the 1970s is that emergencies caused by state controls can be used as a pretext for even more oppressive controls. We would do well to remember the Boston gas-station owner who was arrested for staying open twenty-four hours a day in a crime-ridden area and charging more than the government-allowed price. He was arrested for doing exactly what individuals are supposed to do in a free market. But under Jimmy Carter, that was not so surprising. Carter's idea of an energy policy was to muster all the

coercive powers of the federal government to see to it that Americans would sweat all summer, shiver all winter, wait in endless gas lines, walk to work, and never again enjoy weekend boating. Meanwhile, billions of dollars were doled out in subsidies, credits, and research grants. But at least the federal government under President Carter was not without compassion, or perhaps just a sense of humor. For those unable to cope with the rigors of the "national energy policy," big brother provided a helpful tome entitled "No More Heat? A Self-Help Booklet." Along with such advice as "don't get wet," the booklet advised cold Americans that "newspaper wrapped around your body" and "a paper bag (on your head) can keep you warm . . . cut eye holes in the paper bag." Sad, but true. (It makes you wonder if the authors ever forgot to put holes in *their* paper bags.)

RONALD REAGAN WOULD change all this, he promised us. He understood that regulation was the cause, not the cure, of our energy problems. And no tinkering around, Reagan said; he would just abolish the whole damn Energy Department, and that would be that. And soon after coming into office, the president did take steps toward energy decontrol. Oil prices were deregulated, and the "entitlements" program, which subsidized oil imports, was ended. The allocation schemes—which meant long lines for consumers and heavy paperwork for companies—are finally gone. But the windfall profits tax on oil undoes much of the good that would otherwise accompany decontrol. As Harvard economist Joseph Kalt and researcher Peter Navarro have reported, over half of our domestic crude oil is selling at an after-tax producer price far below the market price of imported oil. The result, of course, is lower domestic production and much higher oil imports. Perhaps 25 percent of oil imports can be attributed to the effects of the windfall profits tax, according to Kalt and Navarro.

As for natural gas, glaring shortages and hampered production were the predictable results of controls. The Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 calls for the "phased removal" of these controls. Although the target date for complete decontrol is 1985, it is entirely possible that Congress will balk as the date draws near. The greedy rev-

enue demands of the federal government, and the misdirected wrath of consumers, may yet give us an excise tax on gas, and/or continued price controls. The inevitable results of these measures would be severely depressed future supplies and higher overall energy prices. These punitive taxes and the price controls limit the funds available, and the incentives, for private energy investment and research.

So despite the sudden burst in the popularity of free-market rhetoric on the banks of the Potomac, it's clear Reagan has not gotten the government out of the energy business. And what of his promise to abolish the Department of Energy? To put it charitably, the administration's proposals call for something far short of abolition. Jimmy Carter allocated \$16.4 billion for DOE. Revised Reagan administration projections for 1982 show expenditures of \$13.7 billion—an improvement, but only a marginal one. This year's DOE budget will still be way

In nature nothing goes to waste; in Washington no program is ever simply eliminated.

over the \$10.7 billion it spent in 1977, and even \$1.5 billion over the amount it spent just last year.

The administration's plan for abolishing DOE has only recently surfaced, and it's the same old federal shell game. The fact is that the Department of Energy is being eliminated *only* in its present form. The huge carcass of the DOE is being carved up so that it can be gobbled up by other cabinet departments, which have been engaged in bloody combat this past year for their shares of the spoils. In nature, nothing goes to waste; in Washington, no program is ever simply eliminated, no matter how deserving. Not only is a government program the nearest thing to perpetual life we will see on this earth, as President Reagan once observed, but for the toughest bureaucracies like DOE, there is even life after death.

Unfortunately, this is no laughing matter. The fury with which the Commerce and Interior Departments fought to absorb DOE programs gives us some idea of just how hard they will fight to keep them. The Commerce Department will receive the juiciest bits of DOE, perhaps 70 percent of all its programs. These will include various emergency preparedness programs, statistical projects, fossil fuels programs, grants programs, and overall national energy policy. Commerce will also get control of a whole new, semiautonomous agency called the Energy Research and Technology Administration. This healthy fledgling with its impressive title will manage the burgeoning nuclear weapons program (itself worth \$6 billion per year), development programs, and uranium enrichment projects. The Strategic Petroleum Reserve will be split between Commerce and the Department of the Interior. Secretary Watt was apparently miffed that he could not add the nuclear weapons program to his stewardship of our national parks, so he was given the Naval Petroleum and Oil Shale Reserves as consolation prizes, along with leasing programs, and power marketing programs like the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Justice Department will have to be content with adding some residual enforcement matters, and the Agriculture Department will no doubt be quite pleased to take on Alcohol Fuels Assistance. Finally, the "demise" of DOE will be good news for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which will once again gain the full independence it once enjoyed. Thus, the great energy shell game.

It does not take particularly subtle powers of analysis to see that this transfer of programs and functions within the federal bureaucracy does not fulfill the promise of a free-market energy policy, and it does not serve to cut down the size of our bloated federal leviathan. Nothing is abolished in this shell game—only the agency name plates are changed. For some programs, like nuclear weapons, this will be the third name change in less than six years, but the basic functions remain unaltered.

The Reagan administration refuses to let the market decide what it can decide best: how scarce resources can be most efficiently invested. The eventual costs could be enormous. The government is manipulating the market through various tax credits and

deductions (which are certainly not to be criticized as tax breaks, but only as market distortions) for solar power, insulation, and various other things. It is also providing research funds for industries which would have plenty of their own money to invest, and the incentive to invest it, were it not for price controls and punitive taxation. This is part of the backward Washington logic that addresses our problems through schemes which make them worse. The billions spent on corporate welfare, in the form of research grants and so forth, are just as objectionable as the high taxes, allocation schemes, and the price controls.

One particularly obnoxious example is the synfuels program. The administration remains committed to spending billions of dollars to demonstrate that synthetic fuels are "commercially viable." But if they *are* viable, why the subsidies? And if they're not, why waste money on them? Of course, lobbyists can justify this sort of thing as an "investment in energy independence," or some other such claptrap. In truth, it is a payoff for a special interest.

PERHAPS THE GREATEST failure of the administration's energy policy, and its most costly compromise of free-market principles, is its intention to continue huge subsidies to the nuclear industry. The government has encouraged the construction of nuclear power plants through loan guarantees and tax-free bonds, and nuclear research and development garners enormous support. Furthermore, the Price-Anderson Act commits the American taxpayer to bailing out nuclear companies in the event of an accident, and thereby absolving the nuclear industry of responsibility for its own safety. Not only that, it is also clear that U.S. tax dollars will be used to decommission nuclear plants once they run their thirty-year life spans or are disabled. Decommissioning is a dangerous and messy business, to put it lightly, with immediate costs that could exceed what it took to build the plants, and eventual costs that are incalculable. The safe disposal of nuclear waste remains a costly and dangerous question mark. One need not be anti-nuke to believe that the nuclear industry must be held responsible for its safety, for disposal of waste, and for eventual decommissioning. At the same time, the industry should be relieved of all gov-

ernment obstacles placed in the way of its free-market development. In the present confusion, with government using one hand to push the nuclear industry ahead with subsidies while using the other to drag it back with artificial obstacles, it's impossible to say whether nuclear power is an economically viable commodity.

As is always the case with government subsidies, past largesse is never adequate in the present. Now we learn that on February 14 of this year nuclear officials were given a cordial reception by the vice president, who is also "czar" of deregulation, and the secretaries of energy and commerce. In this closed-door meeting the nuclear companies sought \$50 billion in low-interest (that is, subsidized) loans for the construction of new plants. This huge expenditure would constitute an unparalleled commitment of funds, far greater than those doled out to Lockheed, Chrysler, the Franklin National Bank, New York City, or even Poland. Only one thing is certain: this huge contribution would not be enough; as soon as Uncle Sam underwrites the project, cost overruns will render previous estimates unrecognizable. Vice President Bush promised a "continuing dialogue" when he should have categorically rejected this unconstitutional and uneconomical suggestion.

All energy sources should be free to compete with one another, and none should receive special favors, none should receive subsidies, and none should be absolved from bearing the full costs of production. The feds might consider the \$7.2 billion loss just suffered by Northwest utility plants from the premature demise of two nuclear plants still under construction ["Going broke on atoms," *INQUIRY*, March 29]. This loss came *despite* an endless line of credit available because Uncle Sam was underwriting the whole project through the Bonneville Power Administration, a creation of the New Deal. I believe that nuclear power has an important role to play in our nation's future, but I would not attempt to impose my judgment on the free market.

ALL TOLD, *DESPITE THE* rhetoric about free-market energy, \$4.2 billion will be spent next year on energy functions, plus another \$8.6 billion in off-budget expenses (for things like the Strategic Petroleum Reserve). There will also

be \$8.8 billion in "tax expenditures," and finally, our "free market" energy policy will require \$11.2 billion in direct loan obligations. The public has been told that DOE is being eliminated, but lo and behold, all we are getting is a cut of perhaps \$1.5 billion out of a total budget of \$13.7 billion, a shift from marketing bureaucracies to research bureaucracies and a deceptive shell game where programs are shifted into bloated old bureaucracies, and bloated new ones. DOE is not being eliminated but merely broken up, and the pieces will nestle into warm niches where they will be even more difficult to ferret out. The coercive powers that turned two shortages in the last decade into full-fledged crises will remain intact. Individual liberty and our prosperity will remain threatened until we renounce, once and for all, any commitment to a "national energy policy" based on anything but the free market.

All this talk about "getting the government off our backs" is no better than Jimmy Carter's talk about "streamlining the bureaucracy," unless it is followed up with decisive, free-market policy. And that means eliminating programs, lots of them, not merely changing the names of departments and "cutting the *rate* of growth" in federal spending. The secretary of energy came to town with the intention of "working himself out of a job." Yet now he is fighting to restore \$1 billion and 4000 jobs to the department he pledged to eliminate. He is backing big subsidies for the nuclear industry and calls cuts in the fossil fuels program unacceptable and "tantamount to elimination of the activity." Isn't that the whole idea?

Last September 24, President Reagan said:

There is only one way to shrink the size and cost of big government. That is by eliminating agencies that are not needed and getting in the way of a solution. We do not need an energy department to solve our basic energy problem. As long as we let the marketplace work, without undue interference, the ingenuity of consumers, businessmen, producers, and inventors will do that for us.

Those words were true then. They are true now. But this administration is losing its chance to act on its own rhetoric; the opportunity is slipping away, unmourned, and the Reagan team seems scarcely even aware of it. It will be tragic for us all if it takes another government-induced energy crisis to remind them. □

BILL WALLACE

The federal conspiracy racket

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS in California have quietly declared war against a little-known crime network that they believe may be more deadly than the Mafia. But civil libertarians, and even some law enforcement officials, are warning that the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, the secret weapon in the feds' crime war, may be more dangerous than the nascent criminal confederation the government is trying to destroy.

Earlier this year, the feds fired the opening salvo in the battle by indicting twenty-five past and present members of the Nuestra Familia, a murderous chicano prison gang whose affiliates have engaged in contract assassinations, extortion, and commando-style bank robberies. Federal officials say the prosecution will be only the first in a series of racketeering trials against California gangs, including the Mexican Mafia and the Aryan Brotherhood, that were spawned in the California prison system during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Although local police and sheriff's departments have been arresting, indicting, and prosecuting gang members for years now, federal strike forces have recently grabbed the spotlight thanks to the RICO act, which makes a federal crime of conspiracies to collect unlawful debts and of racketeering activities—like interstate betting, bankruptcy fraud, and the sale of stolen securities—that affect interstate commerce. Drafted in 1968, and employed in the ABSCAM case as well as federal

prosecutions against Mafia figures in Los Angeles, San Jose, New York, Florida, and Rhode Island, the act targets members of criminal "organizations," whether or not the individuals can be proved to have committed crimes. Critics of RICO say the law is flagrantly unconstitutional and poses a severe threat to the First, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

The act's constitutionality—and effectiveness—will be put to a critical test in the Nuestra Familia trial. Founded in 1967 inside Soledad Prison, a tough institution that has housed such infamous convicts as George Jackson, alleged mass-slayer Juan Corona, and Dan White, the convicted assassin of San Francisco supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone, the Nuestra Familia was originally organized only to help protect chicano inmates from other prisoners and allow them to gain an awareness of their ethnic culture, art, and history.

According to Art Rocco Beltran, a former high officer of the group who has turned state's witness against his former comrades, "The Familia just changed, little by little,

year by year, until it was nothing but a crude version of the Cosa Nostra. It got so that criminal activity was the group's only reason for existing, and you had to prove yourself willing to kill somebody just to get in."

By the time the federal indictments were issued against the group in January, Familia members had been convicted of cold-bloodedly assassinating their organization's "enemies" as well as "weak" members who

violated its draconian constitution. Familianos had murdered nearly a dozen prostitutes and pimps in an effort to monopolize vice in California's Central Valley and had taken control of heroin sales in Fresno, San Jose, and Oakland. Any drug dealers the gang failed to extort or drive out of business were simply killed.

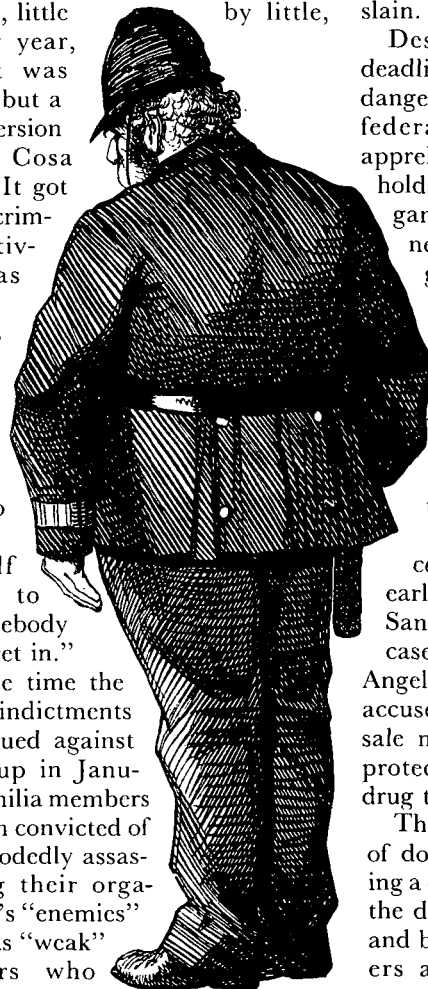
Massive state and county prosecutions of the gang's members took place in several cities during 1978 and 1979. But the Familia's activities continued as if nothing had happened, with key gang officers allegedly directing extortion, narcotics sales, and prostitution rings from cells in maximum-security prisons.

"Hit lists" seized by law enforcement agencies investigating the Familia contained the names of hundreds of potential targets, and at one time more than 1000 informers, enemies, or wayward members were slated for execution by the gang. The indictment handed down by the federal grand jury last January names twenty-eight people the gang had either murdered or attempted to kill. As a benchmark of the gang's effectiveness, twenty-two of these victims were slain.

Despite the Familia's proven deadliness and the clear and present danger it poses to the public, many federal officials confess they are apprehensive about what the future holds for their federal war on the gangs. The RICO indictment "is a new tactic in dealing with these groups, and no one is really certain exactly how it will turn out," one prosecutor who has worked on the case confided. "But if this prosecution fails to produce convictions, I can guarantee you that people will take a long, hard look before they try to use it again."

Part of the reason for their concern is the disastrous legacy of an earlier RICO case that was tried in San Francisco two years ago. In that case, eighteen members of the Hell's Angels outlaw motorcycle club were accused of operating a huge, wholesale methamphetamine ring, and of protecting their involvement in the drug trade by murder and extortion.

The Angels' RICO trial cost millions of dollars. Special facilities—including a courtroom big enough to house all the defendants, prosecutors, lawyers, and bailiffs, plus the dozens of reporters and spectators that the case



BILL WALLACE is a reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle.

attracted—had to be built. Prosecution and defense lawyers spent months presenting their case, and dozens of witnesses, including police, ex-Angels, the club's hangers-on, and alleged victims, paraded through the courtroom for weeks. So much confusing and contradictory evidence was introduced that the trial judge ordered special notebooks for members of the jury, complete with pictures of the defendants, summaries of the charges against them, and blank pages for the jurors to use in taking notes.

In the final analysis, the case was a major embarrassment for the Justice Department. Witnesses for the prosecution, many of whom were themselves ex-convicts with long criminal

were given immunity from prosecution in return for their testimony, all of the witnesses in the Nuestra Familia case have also been indicted, and some face long prison terms for their part in the gang's activities. Special payments to key witnesses, some of whom received tens of thousands of dollars from prosecutors for testifying, were a major scandal in the Hell's Angels case. But witnesses against the Nuestra Familia are receiving only nominal financial assistance from the feds, and some are getting nothing but a pledge that they will be allowed to serve their prison sentences in special institutions where they will be safe from retaliation from their former crime partners.

Despite these precautions, federal

Neil Morse, a San Francisco criminal lawyer who has defended Hell's Angels against federal charges, agrees with Krause's assessment. "As I understand the intention of Congress in passing this act, it was primarily aimed at crooked individuals who cleaned up the profits from illegitimate operations by investing them in legitimate businesses," Morse said. "It was essentially a remedial law designed to accomplish two things: first, to get the people who were poisoning the flow of commerce and, second, to protect businesses themselves from sharp operators who were out to prey on them by infiltrating them or using them to launder illegal money."

In the Hell's Angels case, Morse said, the government interpreted the law in such a way that it was able to say "that the Hell's Angels club is itself a criminal enterprise—an organization primarily set up to deal in narcotics. Thus, by extension, a member of the club is a member of the criminal conspiracy, whether he has engaged in criminal acts or not. This raises profound questions relating to the First Amendment freedom of association. The effect is to get members coming and going: If they've committed an overt act, they're guilty; if they haven't, they are still guilty because they belong to the club." If the government's interpretation of the law holds up in an eventual constitutional challenge, RICO could theoretically be used to declare other groups—for example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or the Democratic Party—"corrupt" organizations, simply because some of their members have been involved in individual crimes.

Another constitutional issue raised by the case, Morse says, is the problem of double jeopardy. "A lot of the incidents which are alleged in this case as predicate crimes—overt acts—are cases which have been tried already. In some of them, the defendants were either acquitted or the charges were dropped."

Morse's client and Angel associate, Richard Motley, is a good example. "I got involved in his case because I was already representing him in state court on charges that were identical to the ones in the federal indictment... he was simultaneously standing trial twice for the same crime," Morse explained.

Although law enforcement officials almost never complain about new

One defense attorney calls RICO the 'neutron bomb of conspiracy laws—capable of completely destroying a variety of constitutional rights without damaging organized crime.'

records, but all of whom were given immunity from prosecution, were simply not credible. The evidence offered by the government was unconvincing. The jury was able to find only one member of the club guilty of the racketeering and conspiracy charges, and "hung" on most of the other defendants. A few of the Angels—including the club's former president, Ralph "Sonny" Barger—were acquitted outright after spending months in jail, and a handful of others were convicted of such minor charges as possession of narcotics and unlawful weapons. A scaled-down second trial of eleven Angels was no more successful than the first, and after the second mistrial, the government hinted at, but never pursued, a third trial.

The Justice Department has taken special pains to insure that a repeat of the Hell's Angels debacle will not occur during the Nuestra Familia trial. Most of the key witnesses in the Familia case have proven themselves credible in earlier murder and narcotics cases, and documentary evidence—including hundreds of pages of manifestos, Familia regulations, "hit lists," and records of illicit income—will form a major portion of the federal case. Whereas many of the witnesses against the Hell's Angels

prosecutors are still haunted by the specter of the Hell's Angels RICO fiasco. As one source close to the investigation said, "There is a real fear that this case could go the same way as the Hell's Angels case did—that it could become a carnival. If that happens, it's all over. There won't be any future RICO trials of gang members."

While federal officials are fearful that the RICO Act will prove ineffective against the gangs, many civil libertarians—including key members of the American Civil Liberties Union—are afraid that the act is more dangerous than the criminal scourge it is intended to destroy. As one worried defense attorney put it, RICO is "the neutron bomb of conspiracy laws—capable of completely destroying a variety of constitutional rights without seriously damaging organized crime."

"The constitutional aspects of the RICO Act have never been passed on by the U.S. Supreme Court," says Marshall Krause, a former chief counsel for the Northern California branch of the ACLU and a private attorney who assisted the Hell's Angels' defense teams during the club's RICO trials. "There are any number of serious questions that have never been authoritatively answered on this act—questions of civil liberties and civil rights.

weapons for their use in the war against crime, even some police and prosecutors believe RICO goes too far. Donald Whyte, an assistant district attorney from Alameda County who has prosecuted key members of the Hell's Angels club in the past, agrees with Morse that RICO seems to sidestep the constitutional prohibition against double jeopardy—prosecuting a suspect twice for the same crime.

"I had some of those guys before a judge myself several years ago on a number of the crimes that were alleged in this federal indictment, and we weren't able to make the charges stick then," Whyte shrugs. "I frankly don't understand the reasoning behind bringing them back into court and trying to convict them for conspiring in a series of crimes that you can't prove they committed in the first place."

Other critics point out that RICO sidesteps federal laws prescribing statutes of limitation for offenses by allowing a prosecutor to allege that a crime which may have been committed years earlier is part of a "continuing pattern of criminal behavior," thus indictable under the act. A case in point is the pending trial of four men in Miami on charges of looting the New England Laborers' Union Trustee Fund. Lawyers for the four have repeatedly asked for dismissal of the charges on the grounds that the statute of limitations for the crimes overtly alleged in the indictment ran out years ago, and no new offenses are charged. Daniel Small, a Justice Department attorney prosecuting the case, claims that, under the law, the government isn't required to provide overt acts in the racketeering indictment. He says the pattern of racketeering described in the indictment continued after the last listed act, and that no further predicate crimes are needed to support the conspiracy charge. RICO critics, however, maintain that the act violates the Sixth Amendment guarantee of a speedy trial by allowing the government to introduce evidence of crimes committed as long as fifteen years in the past as proof of an ongoing criminal conspiracy.

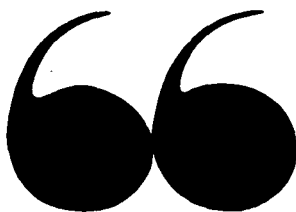
Given all the weighty constitutional arguments against RICO, it will be truly ironic if the act founders because prosecutors are sloppy in putting together the precedent-setting Nuestra Familia case. Some sources close to the prosecution say that key witnesses in the case have already been com-

promised by being coached to lie to the grand jury that issued the indictments. One informant reportedly told the grand jury he was present when a crime was committed by one of the gang members named in the indictment, while other informants have testified that he was not. Other witnesses say they are planning to use the gang trial as a forum for exposing the iniquities of the Federal Witness Protection Program ["The Federal Protection Racket," *INQUIRY*, Oct. 19, 1981], and are planning to raise issues of prosecutorial misconduct when they are called to the stand. If these matters are brought out in the trial, they will undercut the government's case. How much is a matter of conjec-

ture, but as Art Beltran, one of the key witnesses in the case, sums it up, "Right now the feds are almost afraid to put some of these guys in a courtroom because what they could say might damage the case more than help it."

As the Nuestra Familia case goes, some federal sources say, so goes the case against the Aryan Brotherhood and the Mexican Mafia. RICO could be rolled right up and put back on the shelf, and the federal war against the gangs could be over almost before it began. To paraphrase Edward G. Robinson's line after he is gunned down by rival gangsters at the end of the film, *Little Caesar*, Mother of Mercy—this could be the end of RICO. □

WORLDVIEW



These are the times that try men's souls.

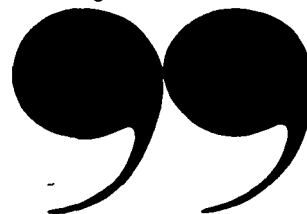
Clearly, Thomas Paine understood the nature of international affairs—the ambivalence, ambiguity, confusion. And just as clearly, what was said of 1776 can be said of 1980. Whether the revolution is in America or Nicaragua, thinking men and women must strive to evaluate, to understand, and, ultimately, to decide.

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Will PAC-MAN End Western Civilization?

by Clark Norton

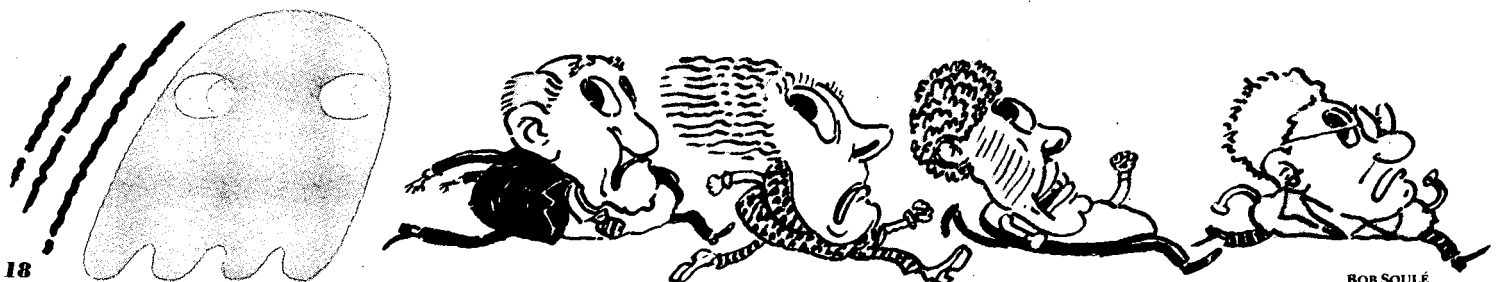
Infants lusting for quarters.
Teenagers reduced to drooling
zombies by video fixes.
Businessmen abandoning three-
martini lunches for bouts with
Space Invaders. Is this how
ancient Rome went out?

DANGER SIGNALS ARE ALREADY PRESENT in my son, age three: glazed-over eyes; aggressive, obsessive, compulsive tendencies; covetous glances at the quarters in my change dish. It all started innocently enough, perhaps, with children's games like "Animal Dominoes," "Candyland," "Go Fish," and "Cootie." These games in themselves are not to blame, of course—after all, previous generations grew up with them, too, and look how we turned out—but they provided my son with his first taste of competitive blood, a thirst for "action" and implicit violence. His next step down the garden path was a Bugs Bunny pinball machine, which more closely simulated the vices of fallen youth. And then, just as surely as candy cigarettes lead to heroin, my son discovered Pac-Man.

We were attending a typically uninspired office party this past Christmas, and the host had rented a Pac-Man electronic video game for the evening. "Something to keep the kids happy," she explained. (Although she sounded naive, I can no longer dismiss the threat of conspiracy.) The Pac-Man had been placed in the corner of a dimly lit, out-of-the-way room that unmistakably resembled an opium den. And there they gathered, these sons and daughters of America in whom our very future rests (some as young as eleven years old!) to vacuously fritter away some of the most precious hours of childhood trying to chomp their way through a dotted electronic maze without getting chomped. The teenagers, of course, were the most insidious—lifting up my son so he could stare mindlessly at the flashing screen, letting him grasp the controls so he could inhale his first puff, as it were, of the video reefer. My son, oblivious to everything—ignoring even the alluring pâtés at the buffet, shunning the cocktail conversation—was hooked.

Since that night, of course—even though he may not say so—my son has thought of nothing but slipping off in the dead of night to sample the forbidden fruits of one of those seedy video game arcades habituated by teenagers and other criminal elements. We're especially concerned that one morning he will play hooky from nursery school and

CLARK NORTON is a contributing editor of INQUIRY and possibly the only living human who has never broken 1000 points at Space Invaders.



hang out at the corner market up the block, where a recently installed Galaxian game has been luring gang-like trios of junior high students. Can juvenile delinquency, drug-dealing, purse-snatching, and kiddie porn be far behind?

But now there is a movement abroad in the land to save my son from suffering the apparent fate of his adolescent elders already mired in the cult of Demon Video. Spurred by citizen-crusaders who campaign with the righteous zeal of Moonie deprogrammers, a variety of communities across the country have risen up to ban or severely restrict the playing of video games, especially among the imperiled young. Here are some key examples:

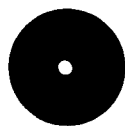
■ In a case that has already reached the U.S. Supreme Court, the city of Mesquite, Texas, a suburb of Dallas with a population of 67,000, is seeking the right to enforce an ordinance banning youngsters under seventeen from playing video games in local arcades without parental supervision. The ordinance has been overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which held that it violated both the Texas and U.S. Constitutions (in the latter case, the Fourteenth Amendment). On February 23 of this year the Supreme Court at least temporarily sidestepped the issue by remanding the case (*City of Mesquite v. Aladdin's Castle, Inc.*) to the appeals court for clarification of its ruling. If the appeals court responds that it ruled primarily on the basis of federal rather than state law, then the case will probably return to the Supreme Court. It could ultimately determine how far other communities may go in regulating video games, if at all.

■ Oakland, California, recently passed and is enforcing an ordinance forbidding youths under eighteen from playing video games outside the home during school hours (7 A.M. to 3 P.M. Monday through Friday) and after 10 P.M. school nights (Sunday through Thursday). A midnight curfew is in effect on weekends and holidays. Several other San Francisco Bay Area communities are preparing similar ordinances, and at least one San Francisco official is pushing for restrictions on video games in residential areas.

■ The town of Brookhaven, New York, has imposed a six-month moratorium on issuing permits for video game parlors in the wake of a dogged vigilante drive led by local PTA mother Ronnie Lamm, who has given speeches, met with government officials, sent out mailings, and circulated petitions on the subject. She has subsequently spread her gospel on the "Today" show and in the pages of the *New York Times*. "These games are corrupting our youth," she told the *Times*. "They are not wholesome. They mesmerize our children, they addict them and force them to mindlessly pour one quarter after another into the slots. . . . The game rooms teach gambling and breed aggressive behavior. And so many are operated by scum coming out of the woodwork, whose only interest is a fast buck."

■ From West Warwick, Rhode Island, to Pembroke Pines, Florida; from Durham, New Hampshire, to Bradley, Illinois (which banned anyone under sixteen from playing video games in shopping centers even though reportedly no games exist in shopping centers there), town fathers have at least figuratively grabbed the joysticks out of their youngsters' hands and taken to zapping all those Space Invaders and Centipedes and Gorfian Robots once and for all.

If all this commotion seems a bit on-the-much-ado-about-nothing side, consider that Americans dropped an estimated 20 billion to 28 billion quarters into coin-operated electronic video games last year, which, as *Time* magazine recently calculated, far surpasses all the money grossed in the United States by the American film industry, the record industry, or all major league sports combined—even the net take of all the casinos in Nevada. *Time* also estimated that Americans spent a total of 75,000 man-years in 1981 playing the games, not counting those devoted to millions of home video sets. The games can now be found not only in the traditional downtown arcades and shopping malls, but also squeezed into any available corners of fast-food restaurants, movie theaters, corner grocery stores, and laundromats.



BVIOUSLY, A LOT OF PEOPLE LOVE video games. Just as obviously (though one must frequently fight off crowds of businessmen at lunch hour), most of them are teenagers. And there's the rub. If their adolescent sons (and to a lesser extent daughters) are feeding all those quarters into machines, many parents fear, they must not be feeding their faces with lunch. They become so engrossed in combatting enemy missiles that they neglect to go to school. And all manner of other horrible things.

Stanford University psychologist Philip Zimbardo says video game fanatics "essentially are like cocaine addicts" who get an "instant rush" from an electronic fix. Zimbardo has identified what he regards as three dangerous aspects to this "addiction" in children: The games are "solitary activities" in which youngsters are "not talking [or] relating to people," but rather develop "totally absorbing relationships to inanimate objects"; the object of the games is "destruction, to eat [enemies] up, to crush them"; and finally, children come to expect that "all knowledge has to be entertainment."

At the same time many adults simply don't like or trust the large congregations of teenagers that hover around video games. "When youngsters get into large groups, they take on a herd mentality," contends San Francisco Supervisor Lee Dolson, who has proposed that the city ban video arcades (or any business from having more than four of the games) within residential areas. "This can be the cause of



eruptions of trouble that neighborhoods don't want to put up with." Dolson says that arcades often attract "literally a hundred or more kids who . . . lose all track of time; they don't go back to school. They literally live there."

Oakland, California, businesswoman Jacquee Castain, who helped lead the drive that resulted in her city's ordinance restricting the hours when young people can play, points to another supposed side-effect of the video craze: crime. Castain, soft-spoken, articulate, and far less shrill than some of her fellow crusaders, claims that street crime—drug dealing, muggings, purse snatchings, prostitution, and the like—increased dramatically in her neighborhood after an all-night donut shop installed ten electronic video games.

"The donut shop started attracting a real negative element," Castain says. "Kids were there at all hours of the day and night. There was so much loitering you couldn't even pass the donut shop on the sidewalk. Senior citizens waiting at the bus stop nearby reported having their purses snatched . . . though I never witnessed that personally. Somebody set up a house trailer next to the shop and brought in young girls to turn tricks. There were all kinds of dope dealings. We were having to call the police over constantly."

Oakland's new ordinance requires the proprietor of a video game site to be responsible for the conduct of his patrons or risk losing his license. Since the ordinance went into effect last December, "it has been beautiful," Castain says. "The block has been quiet again, we don't have muggings, the purse snatchings have gone down, the house trailer is gone." What's more, she adds, the donut shop now has only two video games instead of ten, and the previous owners have sold the place. (Castain insists that if the previous owners had merely cooperated in controlling the youths, she would never have sought an ordinance to begin with. "We did everything possible to work with them first," she says.)

Oakland police say they like the ordinance, too, but they dispute Castain's contention that video arcades generated crime. Increased crime "wasn't the main point behind the ordinance," says Lieutenant Ed Smith of the Oakland Police Department's youth services division. "The thrust of reasoning for passing it was that kids were spending an inordinate amount of time in the arcades and cutting school." Smith says that charges of increased crime are "more of an opinion—I'm not aware of any racing crime statistics around the arcades." Meanwhile, Smith says, "it's kind of early to tell about crime reduction in those areas [since the ordinance was passed]. We have no new statistics at this time that would point to that."

Smith adds, however, that he thinks "the ordinance is doing its job—keeping kids away [from video games] during school hours." That brings us to the crux of the issue.

Are video games really the problem, or are they merely one vulnerable target? Does attacking video games allow us to escape a much wider problem? Are we banning or restricting video games when we really should be taking a hard look at why children are skipping school in the first place? Is the government (once again) stepping into an area of child control that should more properly be handled by parents?

S **POKESWOMAN MARGARET LASECKE** of Warner Communications' Atari company, one of the pioneering giants among electronic video game manufacturers, is hardly a disinterested party in the matter. But she raises an excellent point: "Parents are concerned for good reasons," she says. "Their kids aren't in school. But we think communities should look at the real reasons why they aren't. What are the problems in the schools themselves? Why aren't kids attracted to learning? If we remove video arcades will that prevent truancy? We don't think so."

A quick check with the schools seems to back that up. According to Marian Magid, director of public information for the Oakland public schools, "So far we haven't been able to correlate any decrease in truancy with the video games ordinance. There were slight decreases in December and January, but nothing that can't be attributed to the new antitrucancy programs we've just started. . . . We don't think the ordinance has had a significant effect to date."

Atari's Lasecke says the industry agrees that any activity done to excess is undesirable, and that her company is developing a manual for operators to use in supervising youngsters who play at their sites. "We're concerned that there's unrest in the community over these games," she says. "But we don't think these ordinances are the answer. We'd like to work with the communities to come up with alternatives—our educational division is placing computers in children's museums and developing ways to interact video with the educational process. Why can't learning be fun? We've been sending representatives to city council meetings across the country to try to find new approaches to the problem."

Getting through to local lawmakers on this highly charged topic is not always easy, however, says Randall Ment, executive director of the New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union. When the CLU asked the Board of Selectmen of Durham, New Hampshire, to delay enforcing their restrictive video game ordinance until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the Mesquite, Texas, case, "their response, essentially, was 'flake off,'" Ment reports.

Ment, however, believes the issue should not be so lightly dismissed. "Just because this affects young people and their recreational activity doesn't mean it should be taken less seriously as a constitutional question," he says. "There's



no rational relationship between that ordinance [which prohibits anyone under sixteen from playing coin-operated video games without parental supervision] and state interest. It violates the due process of young people without making any showing of wrong on their part. And it violates their freedom of association—in New Hampshire video arcades are one of the only places where the young can gather.”

Ment says that while the rationale behind the ordinance was a supposed increase in “vandalism, noise, and the like” in the vicinity of the video arcades, “those problems aren’t limited to such arcades. You can have the same types of disturbances at restaurants, bars, and places where adults gather. If this ordinance represented a proper approach, then an analogy would be prohibiting all individuals ages twenty to twenty-four from going to bars if it were found they were the most disruptive age group there. Individuals should only be prohibited from playing if they create disorder—just like if you create disorder in a bar you get thrown out—without punishing a whole group. This sort of *in loco parentis* is inappropriate for a governmental body.”

But constitutional niceties aside, what is a concerned parent to do? After all the philosophizing, speechifying, and psychoanalyzing over this issue, there remains the very concrete question of the fate of my son. Is he really doomed to a future childhood lost in an unwholesome, mesmeric addiction, perhaps with swollen thumbs to boot, if these games are not banned to save him from his baser instincts?

Taking a cue from Brookhaven’s crusading mom, Ronnie Lamm (“I have even been in these game rooms myself,” she had admitted. “I did not play the games, for the same reason I did not gamble when I was in Puerto Rico”), I decided to wander over to my local video arcade. I had to see for myself what manner of young cultists were squandering their lives, as well as their quarters, in the esoteric pursuit of Gorf, Defender, Omega Race, Mouse Trap, Centipede, Galaxian, Stargate, Super Cobra, Pleiades, Vanguard, and, of course, Space Invaders, Asteroids, and Pac-Man. Perhaps I arrived at the wrong time (late afternoon), but I witnessed not a hint of drug dealing, prostitution, or purse snatching; indeed, I couldn’t even detect any notable loitering because everybody was so absorbed in battling alien creatures. Trying to make myself heard above the din (if there is any danger to these arcades, I’d say it’s to the eardrums), I spoke briefly with David Wong, a San Francisco high school student, who was somehow successfully combatting Gorfian robots while devouring a corn dog. Between games, I asked him if Gorf were keeping him from doing his homework. “Nah, from watching TV maybe,” he replied. Where does he get all his quarters? “My allowance.” But aren’t these games addicting? “You mean like dope? I don’t know. I like to play. It’s fun. What’s wrong with that?”

WHILE HE WAS, OF COURSE, UN-
aware of the deeper social issues involved, his question had a certain logical simplicity. I decided I should try my hand at one of these games to see if, once behind the controls, the evil is more readily apparent, the addiction inescapable. I selected a game called Frogger, whose directions read: “Move frog vertically or horizontally using joystick. Object is to safely maneuver frog to its home within allotted time. Cross highway without getting run over and cross river without falling in. Avoid traffic, deadly snakes, otters, crocodiles, and the treacherous diving turtles. Points scored for each jump, safely arriving home and beating timer. Bonus points scored for safely escorting a lady frog home or gobbling an insect.” After a few games [*Editor’s note:* actually, \$9 worth—he billed us for every one], in which my frogs invariably went splat on the pavement (without even finding a lady frog, much less escorting one safely home), I left rather in awe of the nimble fifteen-year-olds who manage to pile up thousands of points on these machines. It is the equivalent feat, say, of keeping a Hula Hoop aloft for hours.

That comparison no doubt dates me as a child of the fifties. It is now somewhat laughable to recall that at the time many parents believed we were engaged in some form of mass hysteria. We, of course, knew different. While we were Hula-Hooping, our minds were on Higher Thoughts. As we swayed for hours, maintaining the gentle undulation of the hoop above our pubescent hips, while our friends gawked in wonderment and our parents gawked in fear of the suggestive sexual overtones, we were all the while mentally reviewing yesterday’s algebra equations or perhaps tracing the global routes of the early explorers. None of this obsessive preoccupation with battling electronic aliens that shuts off one’s perspective on the Real World. No—those of us who were teenagers in past generations knew nothing of mindless amusements; would never have squandered our money on frivolities; would sooner have perished than congregate in large, boisterous groups; were always careful to relate to other human beings rather than machines (nobody caught us spending countless hours at the slide rule).

Far better, I finally concluded, that today’s teenagers should be spending their leisure dollars on junk food, punk rock records, and good dope than on such “competitive, solitary” activities as video games. Thank God they aren’t engaged in such “competitive, aggressive” activities as school sports or such “solitary, mesmerizing” diversions as reading. Far better that they should be hanging out on street corners than packed into crowded video arcades. As a concerned parent—totally unequipped, of course, to guide or discipline his own child in any way—I shudder. Who but my local city government can save my son from a fate worse than crocodiles and treacherous diving turtles? □



REVIVING THE AMERICAN CENTURY

Ronald Reagan wants the United States
to buy the capability of winning
two and a half major wars
around the globe—simultaneously.

by Michael T. Klare

RONALD REAGAN TOOK office in 1981 with promises to cut taxes, slash government spending, eliminate the deficit, and boost the military budget. Critics derided it as “voodoo economics,” and they were right. Spending has grown, taxes have grown, and the deficit has ballooned. President Reagan did keep one promise, however; under his administration, the military budget is rising even faster in real terms than it did during the Vietnam War. No matter how badly the economy flounders, no matter how loudly Wall Street and Middle America cry for mercy, the administration sticks to its guns. “As much as I detest the idea of deficits,” Reagan told a Republican fund-raising dinner in March, “as president I must accept a large deficit if that is what it takes to buy peace for the rest of the century.” Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, relinquishing his once-feared budget scalpel, has led the charge for more bombs, more ships, and more planes into a sea of red ink where budget director David Stockman and even many congressional hawks fear to

swim. Proclaiming “the necessity of rearming America,” Weinberger proposes to spend more dollars on the military in 1985 than the entire federal government spent in 1975. In the administration’s seeming haste to throw money at defense, critics of all ideological persuasions have begun to question whether the White House has any real strategy in mind, or whether it is merely caught up in a frenzy of spending.

The administration clearly hasn’t done an effective job of selling any coherent strategic policy to Congress or the American people. As often as not, Messrs. Haig and Weinberger seem to disagree in public over the proper direction of foreign and military policy. Yet their differences are largely tactical. Taken together, and looked at in the context of the budget, their statements do reflect a common theme: The United States must be prepared to go to war at any time, at any spot on the earth’s surface (or the skies above), and at any level of conflict, from brush-fire insurgencies to full-scale nuclear war. As Weinberger affirmed a year ago, “We must be able to defend ourselves in wars of any size and shape and in any region where we have vital interests.” This strategy emphasizes the global nature of America’s “vital interests” and calls for a

truly global military establishment to police them—something that previous administrations announced as a planning goal, but never actually set out to establish. The Reagan team is attempting nothing less than the restoration, through sheer military power, of the elusive American Century.

BOLD AS ITS POLICIES may be, the Reagan administration has not formulated them in a vacuum; they are the product of years of debate within the national security community. The militant tone of Reagan’s statements on U.S.-Soviet relations recalls that of the Eisenhower administration, especially Ike’s belligerent secretary of state, John Foster Dulles. But while Reagan does borrow his bluster from the rhetoric of the Eisenhower/Dulles era, his military policies actually owe far more to those of the Kennedy administration. Despite the crusading stance of Secretary Dulles, the Eisenhower period was one of relative moderation in the military sphere: once the Korean War was ended, the administration reduced military spending, pared back the armed forces, and slackened the tempo of military operations. These cutbacks were justified on the grounds that the

MICHAEL T. KLARE is a fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C., and author of *War Without End: American Planning for the Next Vietnams*.

United States was amply protected by the threat of "massive retaliation," which held that our willingness to resort to a prompt and merciless nuclear strike would deter an attack on the United States or any of its key allies.

As the Eisenhower period drew to a close, a group of strategic "dissidents" began to challenge the prevailing military policy. Led by former Army Chief of Staff Maxwell D. Taylor and Harvard Professor Henry A. Kissinger, the dissidents charged that massive retaliation was only effective in deterring the unlikely threat of an all-out assault on the United States or NATO, and thus could not effectively deter the revolutionary upheavals then sweeping through the Third World. These critics argued further that even if the loss of any particular Third World regime did not threaten fundamental U.S. interests, the *aggregate* loss of several countries most assuredly would—especially given the rapid expansion of U.S. trade and investment in Third World areas. "Massive retaliation as a guiding strategic concept has reached a dead end," General Taylor wrote in 1960. While it may have prevented "the Great War—a World War III—it has not maintained the Little Peace: that is, peace from disturbances which are little only in comparison with the disaster of general war." To provide U.S. leaders with a full range of responses to any type of threat, Taylor proposed the doctrine of "flexible response," which he defined as "a capability to react across the entire spectrum of possible challenge, for coping with anything ranging from general atomic war to infiltrations and aggressions such as [now] threaten Laos and Berlin."

When John F. Kennedy became president in 1961, the outcasts of the Eisenhower era became the new mandarins in Washington. General Taylor became Kennedy's national security adviser and was later named chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Other former "dissidents" obtained high posts in the Department of Defense. More significantly, Kennedy embraced the dissidents' strategies, and flexible response became the new orthodoxy.

At the Pentagon, the strategy of flexible response was enshrined in what became known as the "two-and-a-half-wars" doctrine. This doctrine held that the United States must be strong enough to fight two major wars

simultaneously—one in Europe and the other in East Asia—along with a limited war (a "half" war) somewhere else. This grandiose scheme obviously entailed an enormous commitment of money and manpower—more than any country could sustain without considerable deprivation for all levels of society—and thus was never fully implemented. Nevertheless, the two-and-a-half-war model remained the governing principle behind U.S. military spending and the organization of

were supposedly at stake in Vietnam, they ultimately forced Washington to abandon the war altogether. The bitter experience of Vietnam prompted legislators to impose tough new restraints on presidential war-making. The public's anti-interventionist mood, later characterized as the "Vietnam syndrome," resulted in passage of the War Powers Act, the ban on U.S. military involvement in Angola, and the abolition of conscription.

In response to these restraints, U.S.

Kennedy's strategists searched for a 'proving ground' to test their tactics and weapons. Their choice: South Vietnam.

the armed forces, as reflected in the maintenance of independent combat commands for Europe (EURCOM), the Pacific (PACOM), and Latin America (SOUTHCOM).

Although the two major wars of the two-and-a-half-war model consumed the bulk of our military resources, it was the half-war threat that most preoccupied U.S. strategists during the Kennedy era. Worried that a string of guerrilla victories could tilt the global balance of power in Moscow's favor, Kennedy's advisers set out to perfect the tactics of "counterinsurgency" warfare. And, as they became more confident of their ability to suppress revolutionary upheavals, these strategists began searching for a "proving ground" to test their tactics and weapons. Much to their later sorrow, they finally chose South Vietnam for this dubious purpose.

THE VIETNAM WAR WAS originally viewed as a "brush-fire" war, a prototype of the "half-war" component of the two-and-a-half-war model, but when Vietnamese guerrillas proved tougher than expected, U.S. leaders escalated the conflict from a half war to a full war and thus threw the whole Kennedy strategy into crisis. Because most Americans came to view the ever-growing U.S. military effort as totally out of proportion to whatever interests

strategists adopted a new, "post-Vietnam" military posture to protect overseas interests while avoiding direct military involvement in marginal Third World conflicts. Because Reagan's military policies were largely forged in reaction to this post-Vietnam posture, it is useful to summarize its principal components here:

■ Core vs. Peripheral Interests:

Recognizing that the American public would not tolerate another major conflict in an area of marginal geopolitical significance, U.S. strategists distinguished between "core" interests, which would be defended with the full might of American power, and secondary or peripheral interests, whose defense would be largely delegated to allies and surrogates. In the first category were Europe, Japan/Korea, and the oil fields of the Middle East; in the second were the remote areas of the Third World.

■ Alliance Systems and the Nixon Doctrine:

To reduce the burden on America's own forces, Washington asked its allies, particularly the major European powers and Japan, to shoulder a greater part of the defense burden, and cultivated "surrogate gendarmes" that would protect American interests in selected Third World areas. This approach, loosely identified as the "Nixon Doctrine," involved a more conspicuous U.S. role in NATO and the sale of vast quantities

of sophisticated arms to regional gendarmes such as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

■ **Détente with Russia and Rapprochement with China:** To further rationalize the exercise of its power, Washington pursued détente with the Soviet Union and opened diplomatic contacts with the People's Republic of China. U.S. leaders hoped that Moscow could be persuaded to help contain and pacify Third World conflicts in return for concessions on trade issues and a slackening of the nuclear arms race. Similarly, the rapprochement with Peking was intended to ease frictions with China and thus reduce the U.S. military role in Asia.

■ **The "One-and-a-Half War" Doctrine:** In response to these initiatives, and in recognition of the inherent limits on U.S. power, the Pentagon finally settled for a more realistic and economical one-and-a-half-war doctrine. With China no longer a major adversary, the one full war was reserved for Europe and the half war for the Mideast, the Korean peninsula, or elsewhere in the Third World.

This strategic design, conceived by the Nixon administration and later refined by the Ford and Carter administrations, prevailed during most of the 1970s. As the decade drew to a close,

their foes. Second, the Nixon Doctrine meant relying on autocratic rulers like the shah of Iran whose interests did not always coincide with those of Washington, and whose authoritarian ways alienated large segments of their own population and thus spawned new revolts; when the shah was overthrown in January 1979, the whole strategy of relying on surrogates collapsed along with him. Third, there were increasing difficulties in distinguishing between "core" interests and "peripheral" interests in an increasingly interdependent world. Turmoil in remote areas can easily spill over into other areas of greater importance. The Islamic upheaval in Iran, for instance, has provoked dissension in other Moslem countries, and the current fighting in El Salvador threatens a regional conflagration in Central America.

These developments severely challenged Washington's adherence to the post-Vietnam strategy, as shown by the erratic policy shifts of the Carter administration. In the end, however, it was not so much foreign as domestic pressures that finally scuttled the entire policy. The one-and-a-half-war doctrine—and the reduction in military strength it entailed—was never fully embraced by the military estab-

Carter's noninterventionist posture in much the same terms as the earlier dissidents attacked massive retaliation. They argued that American restraint in even such peripheral areas as Angola and Ethiopia would encourage greater challenges in more critical areas like the Middle East. In a summary of the dissidents' position, *Business Week* observed in 1979 that "the policies set in motion during the Vietnam War" now threatened "to undermine the nation's ability to protect the vital oil supply" of the Middle East, and thus threatened also "the way of life built since World War II." These arguments, which became increasingly strident after the fall of the shah and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, ultimately formed the centerpiece of Reagan's critique of Carter in the 1980 presidential election.

NOW, AS IN KENNEDY'S day, the outcasts of the preceding epoch are the new arbiters of policy: Alexander Haig is secretary of state, and many other critics of Carter's policies have received key administration positions. What is more significant, this group of former dissidents has adopted many of the strategic concepts of the earlier group. Reagan's "ecumenical" defense posture seems derived from none other than Maxwell Taylor's strategy of flexible response. Indeed, there is not much to distinguish between Weinberger's call for a restored capacity "to defend ourselves in wars of any size and shape and in any region where we have vital interests," and Taylor's earlier call for "a capability to react across the entire spectrum of possible challenge."

At its most basic level, therefore, Reagan's military posture is a restatement of the flexible response doctrine of the Kennedy era. But Reagan's policies contain several new and important features:

■ **Globalism:** In contrast to the core vs. periphery approach of the post-Vietnam era, the Reagan administration has adopted a globalist military posture, in which all areas of the world are assumed to harbor or bear upon some "vital interest" of the United States. This posture views "vital interests" in both the literal sense—that is, particular overseas sources of raw materials required by the U.S. economy—and in the more general sense that America is assumed to have

Reagan has adopted a globalist military posture, in which all areas of the world are assumed to bear upon some 'vital interest' of the country.

however, new challenges at home and abroad began to claw away at its underlying assumptions. First, détente never provided the benefits—increased Soviet collaboration in the containment of Third World conflicts—promised by its authors; although Moscow did cooperate in some areas (in particular the Middle East, where it helped restrain Egypt during and after the October 1973 war), it continued to aid independence movements in the Portuguese colonies and later helped leftist governments in Angola and Ethiopia to overcome

lishment, which launched an increasingly vociferous campaign to reverse the Vietnam syndrome and build up its overseas capabilities.

The campaign triggered the emergence of a new group of "strategic dissidents" who, like those of the Eisenhower period, challenged the premises of prevailing doctrine. These critics—led by such military heavyweights as former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, former NATO Commander Alexander Haig, and former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt—attacked

a vested interest in the preservation of the existing world order against all challenges. Noting that "we live in an era in which a coup, a major strike, a terrorist attack, or a remote war between contentious neighbors can, to an unprecedented degree, trigger worldwide consequences affecting our national welfare and security," the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David C. Jones, told Congress in January 1981 that we "require a comprehensive strategic vision that integrates regional issues within a larger global framework." In keeping with this approach, Defense Secretary Weinberger told the military services to develop contingency plans allowing the United States to respond to hostile Soviet moves in one area by striking back in another. "We have to be prepared to launch counteroffensives in other regions," he declared a year ago, "and to exploit the aggressor's weaknesses, wherever we might find them."

■ **Unilateralism:** Despite a rhetorical commitment to NATO, the Reagan administration apparently places far less reliance on allies and surrogates than did previous administrations. Defense officials insist that we must be able to act unilaterally when necessary to protect the world order. This approach is most often applied to the Persian Gulf area, where the United States has assumed full responsibility for the defense of Western oil supplies, but also has been extended to other Third World areas.

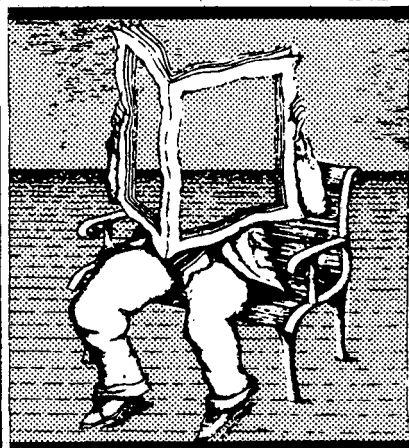
■ **Confrontation Instead of Détente:** The administration's verbal assaults on the Soviet Union have been sustained and widely publicized. In the same vein is the administration's stated disinclination to engage in new arms-control negotiations with Moscow. Such talks, according to Secretary Haig, "cannot be the political centerpiece or the crucial barometer of U.S.-Soviet relations." Instead, he told the Foreign Policy Association last year, the administration will place far more emphasis on countering Soviet moves in the Third World. In responding to such moves—which can include the aggressive actions of "proxy" countries like Cuba, Libya, and Vietnam—the administration is fully prepared to consider military intervention. As Reagan suggested in response to a question about El Salvador, "We will not just sit passively by and let this hemisphere be invaded by outside powers."

■ **No Nuclear Inhibitions:** While

President Carter often expressed his aversion to the use of nuclear weapons, the current administration seems far more relaxed in its thinking on nuclear warfare. This is not to say that administration officials welcome the prospect of nuclear war, but rather that—in accordance with their commitment to a strategy of flexible response—they view nuclear weapons as just one of a spectrum of weapons they may have to select in responding to some future contingency. When Secretary Weinberger said that the United States might have to escalate "vertically as well as horizontally" in response to a Soviet assault on Mideast oil fields, he meant vertically up the ladder of escalation from conventional to nuclear weapons, and horizontally along the earth's surface from one locale to another. The same outlook is reflected in the administration's determination to accelerate the

modernization of U.S. theater nuclear weapons in Europe and aboard U.S. vessels at sea.

■ **Back to a Two-and-a-Half-War Doctrine:** Consistent with the above principles, the Reagan administration has implicitly revived the two-and-a-half-war posture of the Kennedy era. Only this time the two and a half wars will simply be theaters of one big war with the Soviets. "Our long-term goal is to be able to meet the demands of a worldwide war, including concurrent reinforcement of Europe, deployment of Southwest Asia [the Persian Gulf], and support in other potential areas of conflict," Weinberger said in a recent report to Congress. In Reagan's scenario, the Persian Gulf area has replaced the Far East as the most likely major war theater outside of Europe. To provide the United States with a full-war capability in the Persian Gulf area, the Rapid Deploy-



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ment Force (RDF) has been promoted from a subordinate command to a full-scale "unified command" like PACOM, EURCOM, and SOUTHCOM. This decision will entail the establishment of elaborate U.S. logistical, communications, and intelligence facilities in the Gulf region, and ultimately the permanent deployment of U.S. combat forces in the area.

■ **Naval Supremacy:** In line with its globalist policy and its concern over imported raw materials, the Reagan administration is determined to preserve and expand U.S. supremacy at sea. During the 1980 election campaign, Reagan pledged to raise U.S. naval strength from 450 to 600 vessels, and Secretary Weinberger subsequently drafted a five-year, \$120 billion shipbuilding plan to fulfill this pledge. Navy Secretary John Lehman foresees the need for a navy able to "prevail" over "the combined threat of our adversaries" in all major oceans and even in the home waters of the Soviet Union. Naval superiority is also considered essential to the Rapid Deployment Force, which must be supplied by sea, and for the success of the administration's "strike back anywhere" policy. Because "we must be prepared for waging conventional war that may extend to many parts of the globe," Weinberger declared, "our need for naval superiority acquires special dimension."

■ **The Rehabilitation of Counterinsurgency:** To prepare for its remaining "half-war," the Department of Defense is reviving the counterinsurgency establishment originally created during the Vietnam period and later dissolved when the war ended. This program—which includes the Army's Special Forces, the Navy's SEAL (sea/air/land) commando teams, and the Air Force's Special Operations Force—has received new funding and attention from the Pentagon and is being integrated into the RDF. More important, these units have already been dispatched to selected Third World battlefields—most conspicuously, to El Salvador—and are likely to serve with even greater frequency in the years ahead.

■ **Readiness:** Alongside these components of the administration's strategic design, there is one principle that permeates and animates all the rest: readiness, or the accelerated mobilization of U.S. forces for combat abroad. As Weinberger defines it, readiness "refers to items that increase

the near-term capability of our forces to react to contingency situations, to deploy rapidly and efficiently, and to sustain combat operations." Under this heading, Weinberger requested \$11 billion in additional spending in fiscal 1981–82, most of which will be used for development of the RDF and for the acquisition of additional fuel, rations, and ammunition. The RDF will consume even larger amounts in future years, as it is groomed for its new role as guardian of the Persian Gulf region. Beyond these practical measures, moreover, readiness implies a particular *state of mind*—a new willingness to contemplate war as a reasonable and even necessary instrument of U.S. foreign policy. This outlook, which contrasts sharply with the noninterventionist stance of the Viet-

and other fissionable materials for the host of new nuclear weapons now entering production; and expansion of the military-industrial base, involving the diversion of investment and technical resources from the civilian to the military economy.

Taken together, these principles and initiatives will have a profound impact both on U.S. foreign policy and on the quality of life at home. The massive military buildup now underway will put enormous burdens on our liberty, as taxation and moves to renew conscription exact their toll on the American people. But it is in the international sphere that these policies will have the greatest impact. For there is no escaping the conclusion that the administration's intent to resist all challenges to the existing world

Readiness is a state of mind— a new willingness to contemplate war as a necessary instrument of policy.

nam syndrome, is reflected in frequent statements by Reagan, Haig, and Weinberger to the effect that the United States will not "sit passively by" in response to Soviet provocations, and in their commitment to the expansion of U.S. interventionary capabilities. As expressed by the secretary of defense, this stance holds that "our global interests and commitments dictate that [we begin] developing urgently a better ability to respond to crises far from our shores, and to stay there as long as necessary."

WITH READINESS AS the standard-bearer, these eight principles constitute the forward echelon of Ronald Reagan's military posture. Other components—each with profound consequences of their own—follow in their wake: increased arms sales to pro-U.S. regimes in the Third World; increased military collaboration with China, including the sale of sophisticated weapons and arms-making technologies; stalling on strategic arms control negotiations; stepped-up production of plutonium

order—wherever and whenever they may arise—increases the risk of U.S. military involvement abroad. At best, such involvement would be restricted to an endless series of "police actions," such as the 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic; it could result in another major conflict like Vietnam or Korea—or something even worse. Because many Third World nations are now equipped with a full range of modern weapons, and because the Soviet Union has acquired an expanded capacity to defend and support its favored allies, any U.S. expeditionary action in Asia or Africa would risk escalation into a larger conflagration or even a superpower conflict. Far from deterring war, therefore, the Reagan buildup, fueled by a belligerent foreign policy, gravely threatens the very basis of our own security and safety. □

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WHY WE WERE IN VIETNAM, by Norman Podhoretz. Simon and Schuster, 240 pp., \$13.50.

The way we weren't

WILLIAM SHAWCROSS

IMUST, DEAR READER, COM-mence this review by admitting a bias. I have an interest in Norman's latest work.

On second thought, I am being less than forthright—indeed, perhaps I am even covering up. I must confess that I have a very considerable stake in *Why We Were in Vietnam*.

My interest (or stake) is hardly intellectual; the most important part of it is financial. I am hoping to make money off of Norman and the fact causes me no small pangs of delight—frissons of joy, if you will.

How can this be? It is really not complicated. Norman, in his wisdom, refers in his tract to my book, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. To be precise, he refers to it in terms which make me blush and which will send my happy publishers—who by chance are his as well—scurrying to issue new advertisements in those journals whose readers favor the views that Podhoretz attempts (not with consistent success) to articulate. I refer of course to such organs as *Human Events*, *National Review*, and even, why not, Norman's own *Commentary*. Readers of *INQUIRY* who happen also to read any of these sheets will soon see full-page ads bearing the immortal words: "‘*Sideshow* is a brilliantly written and argued book’—Norman Podhoretz."

With such marvelous publicity—entirely unsolicited, I should add—I anticipate vast new sales. Reprint rights will flourish. New editions—of which there will have to be many—will all be emblazoned with Norman's

kind (dare I say "brilliant") words. I am very grateful. If he is ever in my neck of the woods I will buy him a drink. Maybe two.

In such heady circumstances readers will not, I know, expect me to feign impartiality, or what is called in the trade "objectivity," about Norman's new book. Of course, I wondered, given my interest (or stake) in it, whether I should return it to the book editor with a modest disclaimer as to my unsuitability as a reviewer. But, fully conscious that Norman himself

would find such qualms feeble, effete, perhaps "liberal," and definitely to be dismissed, I have soldiered on. Since readers now know the extent of my debt to Podhoretz, I think I can be free to give his book all the praise it merits.

Why We Were in Vietnam is tosh, sentimental balderdash of an utterly unattractive kind, filled with sound and fury, signifying nothing, absolutely nothing at all but the unschooled meanderings of a narrowing mind.

I'll say that again, slightly differently. Podhoretz's book is a joke, a bad joke, a waste of precious trees, a wretched attempt to make an argument which almost anyone else could have made better (even I could have made it better), a work which will give cheer to his enemies (who seem to be many) and no cheer at all to his friends (of whom there must be a few).

Podhoretz's purpose, fairly enough,



WILLIAM SHAWCROSS is a contributing editor of *INQUIRY* and the author of *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*.

VINT LAWRENCE

he claims, is "to reopen the debate over Vietnam from which the United States was prematurely delivered in the closing years of the war." Why? To answer questions: "Do the policies that led the United States into Vietnam deserve the discredit that has been attached to them? Does the United States deserve the moral contumely that Vietnam has brought upon it in the eyes of so many people, both at home and abroad? Is it true, as the German novelist Günter Grass has said, that America 'lost in Vietnam its right to appeal to morals'?" His answer to these questions is "No," thrice.

I can agree with part of Podhoretz's claim early on—that after the fall of Saigon in 1975 "overnight, it seemed, Vietnam, the great obsession of the past decade and more, disappeared from the national consciousness. The newspapers, magazines, and television stations carried what were in effect obituary notices, and the debate, along with the war which provoked it, was then hastily interred in the forensic equivalent of an unmarked grave." I thought at the time and still think today that that was unfortunate. What Podhoretz does not dwell upon (and the omission is typical) is that it was not so much the press and television which immediately lost interest, but the Ford administration—particularly in the person of Dr. Henry Kissinger—which worked hard to shovel concrete onto the grave. Both Ford and Kissinger constantly asked that there be "no recriminations" about the war, which meant no discussion. Later on, in 1977, Kissinger told the London *Observer*, "The time has come to end the Vietnam War debate. It could backfire, you know. If it continues, sooner or later the right will be heard from too. And then we could have a very nasty controversy." Perhaps it was Norman's emergence that he feared.

Unlike Dr. Kissinger and, indeed, many of those who opposed the war, I see no reason why such a debate should not take place. Better late than never. The interest in books and films about Vietnam that was growing by the end of the seventies seems to me far better—for the sake of everyone who suffered, be they children of Indochina or of the United States—than silence. If the price of such discussion is rubbish like *The Deer Hunter* and *Why We Were in Vietnam*, then it is well worth paying. As part of the dialectic each

has its role; indeed, both are so shallow and fraudulent as to do their opponents far better service than they do their own.

ONE OF THE MORE EGREGIOUS frauds of Podhoretz's little effort—at least on a personal level—was pointed out by Theodore Draper (as well as by others) in his review in the *New Republic*. For those who did not see it, let me recapitulate. Podhoretz abuses, mocks, and vilifies almost everyone who ever spoke or wrote a word against America's presence in Vietnam, and blames them for the catastrophic turns in the war effort. Yet he somehow forgets to reveal that he, too, was once a critic of the war. Indeed, Draper points out, as recently as 1979, in Podhoretz's last book, *Breaking Ranks*, he acknowledged that the war "could only be fought in ways that were bound to seem, and sometimes actually were, immoral and atrocious." Nowhere in this new concoction is even a whiff of that other Norman presented to us; nowhere does any such pusillanimous villain-figure appear in his rogue's gallery of intellectuals, quasi-intellectuals, and pseudo-intellectuals, all of whom he coruscates for saying just such things (and sometimes milder things) and for thus bearing "a certain measure of responsibility for the horrors that have overtaken the people of Vietnam." It's a pity he did not have the courage to own up that he, too, has changed his mind. And it's odd; one would not have thought it such a fearful thing to do.

In compiling this book, Podhoretz does not seem to have done any original research. That is not necessarily required in writing a book, but it is worth noting that this work is scarcely more than a compilation of quotations from other people. He nits and picks his way through the work of those he dislikes—Susan Sontag, Frances Fitzgerald, and Hans Morgenthau (a former friend)—and does a bit of forelock tugging over the thoughts of writers or politicians for whom he has more time, like Günter Lewy, Richard Nixon, and Henry Kissinger. Particularly in his attempt at a historical analysis of the 1950s, he gives Nixon rather a lot of space and even more credence. Perhaps he is right, though, in thinking him more reliable than Kissinger.

Podhoretz's own recollection and interpretation of history does not inspire confidence. For example, he acknowledges that after the 1954 Geneva

Conference, which instituted the temporary division of Vietnam, the U.S. began doing everything possible to build up the South. This, among other things, "involved acquiescing in Diem's refusal" to honor the provisions of the Geneva Accords calling for national elections in 1956 to unify the country. He quotes Eisenhower as saying that Ho Chi Minh would easily beat Diem in elections in 1954 and again in 1956. How much followed from that fact, recognized by Eisenhower, and from Diem's method, in which the U.S. happily "acquiesced," of avoiding its consequences! And how simply, how absurdly, Norman brushes it aside and goes on to declare some pages later, "It is hard to see how anyone can still maintain that a civil war was going on in Vietnam and that it was only the United States that provoked the North into intervening." Whosoever was the provocateur, it is "hard to see"—impossible, I should say—how anyone could maintain that the war in Vietnam was anything *but* a civil war: a civil war in which other parties intervened, some with men and some merely with matériel, but a civil war nonetheless. To be sure, those were not Vietcong tanks or troops that stormed the presidential palace in Saigon in 1975—but they were not Kazak hordes, either. If Vietnam was not a civil war (in whose inception the betrayal of the 1954 Geneva Accords played a large part), then I suppose that, by Podhoretz's standards, the war in El Salvador is not a civil war either.

Podhoretz's view is that the United States got itself involved in Vietnam through an excess of goodwill. I agree with him that what has been called "the Munich syndrome" was an important influence on many people making policy—and it would have been extraordinary, even very disturbing, had Munich faded from consciousness. It is also true that the atrocities committed by communist regimes elsewhere in the early fifties led others to determine that such things should not be repeated elsewhere, Vietnam included. (I have not read all of Susan Sontag's recent speech on the errors of the left, but if, as I understand, she was saying that communist rule has been pretty uniformly appalling for the people who have endured it, she was obviously quite correct.) But in stressing these sentiments Norman does his best to

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ignore or to finagle all the misconceived great-power politics leading to the extension of the American commitment. The fact that the critics of the war were correct in claiming that Vietnam would not be a Chinese satellite he acknowledges in a throwaway line, although that perception was one of the more important of the period, and its critics were rigorously ignored by those prosecuting the war.

On the basis of his notion that Vietnam was an idealistic war idealistically fought, Norman declares "nothing is easier to refute than the moral case against the American intervention in Vietnam." Few things, in fact, are simpler to refute than that statement—one sentence from Norman himself is enough: "In short it seems reasonable to conclude that the only way the United States could have avoided defeat in Vietnam was by staying out of the war altogether." If that is what he believes, then he cannot also claim a moral basis for involvement. What morality is there in embarking upon a cause that is bound to be lost, and bound also to cause untold death and destruction in the losing thereof?

It is true, as Podhoretz emphasizes, that life in postwar communist Indochina has been immeasurably worse and more cruel than most opponents of the war had predicted or hoped. In a sense they do bear, as he asserts, "a certain measure of responsibility" for what has happened. Perhaps everyone does. But how can one assess the extent of their responsibility alongside that to be borne by those who insisted on prosecuting, expanding, and prolonging a war in which, according to Podhoretz, "defeat was unavoidable"? This subject—the extent to which the war itself overturned the societies in which it was conducted—he does not consider. Probably it does not occur to him.

Thus on the question of Cambodia and the rise of the Khmer Rouge, he quoted Kissinger's aide, Peter Rodman, as saying (in an attack on *Sideshow*): "By no stretch of moral logic can the crimes of mass murderers be ascribed to those who struggled to prevent their coming to power." That sounds fine, as so many of Kissinger's statements often do. But it carefully and cleverly eludes one of the real problems—that the Khmer Rouge barely existed before the war began, that it was the war that nurtured them and created the conditions—the only

conditions—in which they could have come to power. Just as the Bolsheviks could never have seized Russia without the devastation of World War I, the Khmer Rouge could never have taken over Cambodia but for the destruction of Cambodian society between 1970 and 1975. In neither the first nor the second volume of his memoirs does Kissinger manage to show that he does not bear vast responsibility for the way that happened. Had Podhoretz addressed such issues he might have produced an interesting book. As it is, he has not.

Nonetheless, in my conceit, I still like what he says about me. Apart from the quote I have already cited in triumph, he accuses me of "perverse moral and intellectual" methods, of "intellectual sin," "a species of philistinism," and "craven sophistry." All good copy. Forgive me, dear reader, for being so self-centered as to refer yet again to myself in reviewing a book about a subject so important as the Vietnam War, but believe me, there's not much else of interest in poor Norman's effort. □

STRANGE GODS: The Great American Cult Scare, by David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe, Jr. Beacon Press, 249 pp., \$13.50.

The new body snatchers

THOMAS ROBBINS

MORE THAN THREE YEARS after the massacre at Jonestown, controversies over "cults" still rage on despite indications that the surge of esoteric religious movements peaked in the mid-seventies and has now subsided. These controversies, however, are increasingly one-sided, and the media seem totally dominated by a horrific invasion-of-the-body-snatchers image of cults. In this conception, helpless "cult victims" are at the mercy of an

THOMAS ROBBINS is coeditor of *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America*.

omnipotent "technology of social influence" that destroys their free will and transforms intelligent and sensitive young persons into mindless zombies. Cult-controlled robots are assumed to be incapable of rationally evaluating their involvement in authoritarian sects; they must be forcibly "liberated" from their subhuman existence and subjected to counterindoctrination or "deprogramming," which is touted as a valuable new mental-health therapy. Kidnappings aimed at "rescuing" alleged cult victims are rarely prosecuted successfully. Moreover, physically coercive deprogramming may be on the verge of being legalized in several states by means of legislation permitting parents to obtain temporary guardianship or conservatorship over adults whose personalities are deemed to have been altered by "coercive mind control."

The prevailing body-snatching mythology has effectively monopolized public discourse on new religious movements for a number of reasons. The impact of the Jonestown trauma is a primary factor, and so is the mythology's kernel of truth: Some groups are authoritarian and do employ manipulative and heavy-handed methods of indoctrination. Finally, the cults themselves have had an interest in perpetuating the mythology. The Unification Church, for instance, presents itself as a dynamic, powerful movement that is sweeping the country and reconstructing the culture; it is not eager to advertise its high rate of spontaneous defection as well as its inability to recruit more than a fraction of those who attend a preliminary indoctrination workshop. Thus, there has been a de facto collaboration between cults and their opponents to maintain an inflated estimation of the power and effectiveness of cultist methods of persuasion.

Sociologists David Bromley and Anson Shupe have been studying both the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon and the fervent and organized opposition to the Moon movement and other cults for over half a decade. They have previously published two scholarly monographs: "*Moonies*" in *America* and *The New Vigilantes*, the latter being a study of deprogramming and the "anticult movement." *Strange Gods* combines the data and analyses of the earlier volumes and introduces a wealth of material from secondary sources on five additional groups:

Hare Krishna, The Children of God, The Divine Light Mission, Scientology, and The People's Temple. Eminently readable, this volume will reward both scholars and interested citizens.

The authors argue that the furor over cults is "a 'scare' in the truest sense of the word. There is no avalanche of rapidly growing cults. . . . Much of the 'cult explosion' has been pure media hype. There is no mysterious brainwashing process used to trap and enslave millions of young Americans." Few young adults have even experimented with membership in any cult and "the vast majority of those who have tried them walked away after a brief stay." There is no uniform cult pattern; even the highly

Much of the 'cult explosion' has been pure media hype.

authoritarian sects vary markedly in structure and organization, doctrines, members' lifestyles, and methods of recruitment.

Although models of "thought reform" and "coercive persuasion" can definitely be applied to some of the more authoritarian sects, it does not follow that the participation of devotees is either involuntary or irrational. The "techniques" utilized by cults are extensions of standard group-dynamics and social-psychology principles that are routinely applied in many respectable contexts like psychotherapy, weight-control, and drug rehabilitation. "Such techniques, even when it can be shown they are used, are neither mysterious nor new, nor have they nearly the effectiveness attributed to them by popular writers," the authors write.

Shupe and Bromley reveal that the vast majority of popular exposés of cultist brainwashing are limited not only to the Unification Church but exclusively to the operations of the "Oakland Family" of Moonies. The Oakland Family has, it is true, carried deceptive proselytizing, manipulative thought-reform, and seductive "love-bombing" to a ludicrous extreme, as described in detail by the authors. The

common stereotype of deceptive cultist recruitment is based largely on the Oakland Family's "Creative Community Project" at Booneville farm, but the Booneville pattern really doesn't fit most other cults or even other Moonie groups. In the case of the Hare Krishnas, far from wanting to recruit everybody in sight by concealing the stringent obligations of membership, they mandate a six-month probationary period for prospective joiners during which unsuitable candidates are screened out.

Allegations of deceptive recruitment against most cults can be reduced to a charge of "indirect deception" reflecting the failure of the cult to agitate against itself by spelling out to the prospective recruit all the eventual costs, sacrifices, and entanglements that could result from an initial commitment. Perhaps cult proselytizers should inform the prospective Moonie or Krishna that one day he will quite likely bitterly regret having dropped out of dental school to waste precious years fundraising for the messiah instead of learning marketable skills and forming a conventional family. But can conversion to a messianic religion "be handled like purchasing a washer and dryer, complete with limited warranties for parts and labor and money-back guarantee?"

The balanced and iconoclastic nature of the authors' analysis is illustrated in their treatment of deprogramming. Contrary to deprogrammers' claims, their procedures do not "liberate the mind" or restore the ability to think to a person who has "snapped." On the other hand, neither is "successful deprogramming, as civil-liberties defenders argue, largely the result of the coercion factor." Deprogramming "works" precisely because continued involvement in a cult "is fundamentally a rational decision" based on a cost-benefit calculus. Deprogrammers are able to create a context in which the cost-benefit equation associated with continued participation in the group is altered. The devotee is urged to reexamine his suppressed doubts about the movement and its leaders. Tearful parents bring the deprogramme to a realization of how much grief he is causing those who have always loved him. "Suddenly, after all the arguing, tears, ambivalence, and emotional drain, the deprogramme decides that the new religious faith is not worth what it costs," Shupe and Browley write.

The deprogrammed exdevotee is under psychological pressure to reinterpret his experiences in the cult and rationalize his defection. The mystique of "brainwashing" resolves a number of conflicts because it detaches both the exdevotee and his parents from responsibility for the latter's involvement with a notorious group. ("He never wanted to be a Moonie; he was just a victim of hypnotic mind control!") The deprogramme's reconciliation with his parents as well as his acceptance by respectable society is promoted by the mind-control mythology, which also vindicates the extreme methods employed by parents to win back their child.

ONCE CONVERTED TO THE perspective of deprogrammers, the exconvert is likely to become an embittered apostate, who eagerly tells "tales of atrocities that include lurid themes of exploitation, manipulation, and deception." These stories contain elements of truth but are sometimes embellished and mix fact and interpretation. Nevertheless, they have a compelling first-person quality and they "outrage audiences, frighten families of members currently in new religions, and make public officials more willing to consider controlling the so-called cults."

Yet there is a silent majority of exdevotees who were not deprogrammed but who walked away from their groups voluntarily. These persons are less likely to accept the prevailing demonology or to recriminate vehemently against cults. They are often deeply ambivalent about their experiences in a movement. Not having embraced a mystique that absolves them from responsibility, they are embarrassed about their involvement with a stigmatized group and so avoid publicity. Naturally, they have little impact on public discourse on cults.

According to the authors, new religions have "played a positive role in the lives of many young adults." Some groups have recruited heavily from the drug subculture and from social drop-outs and provided many persons with a bridge back to more conventional lives. Many individuals learned new social skills and gained personal insight in unconventional spiritual and therapeutic movements. Undoubtedly others experienced serious problems in cults and have been hurt by their "wasted" years of subservience to

some self-proclaimed savior.

These difficulties do not justify the repressive legislation being advocated in some quarters. Bromley and Shupe are particularly concerned about conservatorship and guardianship bills, which were introduced in several states in 1981, and which would allow parents to gain legal custody over an adult child alleged to be encapsulated in an organization practicing mental coercion. Most bills of this nature are modeled after legislation sponsored by New York Assemblyman Howard Lasher, whose guardianship bill was passed by both houses of the New York legislature in 1980 and 1981 only to be vetoed by Governor Hugh Carey. Similar bills are being considered in several states this spring, and some are likely to be passed. The Lasher Bill would permit deprogramming once custody has been granted. In effect, the judicial and administrative processes of the state would be employed to induce persons to recant their faiths.

In *Strange Gods*, Bromley and Shupe have given us a perceptive and scrupulously balanced analysis of the controversy over cults, brainwashing, and deprogramming. However, they fall somewhat short of full sensitivity to the civil-liberties issue. Deprogramming, they affirm, is rational, even if it is coercive; it "depends on argument." Quite so; some young devotees cannot defend their beliefs in front of a hostile inquisitor, and allow themselves to be talked out of their commitment. But why should they be forced into a confrontation to defend their faith, as if faith had to be rational to deserve constitutional protection? The authors note that parents involved in coercive deprogramming "are basically motivated by love and concern for their children." But so are the parents who abduct their adult child because he is a homosexual or plans to marry someone with the wrong skin color. Recently, the Supreme Court let stand an appellate court decision allowing an abducted cultist to sue parents and deprogrammers under the civil-rights statutes, which the Court interpreted as protecting religious as well as racial minorities. This is merely a theoretical victory, since prejudiced juries may withhold awards. We can only hope that the pervasive concern with "saving the family" will not legitimate the kidnapping and imprisoning by parents of their nonconformist adult offspring. ■

THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM, by Michael Novak. Simon and Schuster, 432 pp., \$17.50.

Conned by the neocons

GEORGE H. SMITH

JOHAN PAUL II, ACCORDING to Nicholas von Hoffman, is a soft-core socialist. And this makes von Hoffman a happy man. Writing on "Papal Economics" in the *New Republic* last November, he provides a sympathetic account of the recent encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* ("On Human Work"). Von Hoffman points out that the pope is no believer in Reaganism (never mind that our intrepid journalist identifies Reagan and—would you believe it?—Jerry Falwell as champions of laissez faire; this slip pales in comparison with others) and he applauds John Paul II for his opposition to "unchecked and dangerous economic individualism." Then von Hoffman proceeds to unleash a torrent of clichés. The pope is a good economist because he bases his approach on *people* rather than *money*. The pope favors intelligent, creative planning instead of the abandonment of society to the impersonal, mechanistic forces of competition. And on and on it goes. Conservative pope and liberal journalist join hands in an orgy of economic ignorance.

Both men would do well to read Michael Novak's *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*. Novak, Catholic defender of democratic socialism turned Catholic advocate of democratic capitalism, has written a remarkable book. It is remarkable not for its content (which, though often good, is largely an integration of previous free-market theory), but for its stated purpose. Novak seeks to establish the moral and cultural foundations of "democratic capitalism" and to show that capitalism, far from leading to spiritual impoverishment as religious critics often charge, actually promotes and

nourishes the values essential to the Christian tradition.

This theme has been set forth before, but usually by Protestant writers. With notable exceptions, such as Lord Acton and Hilaire Belloc, the libertarian vision has found few supporters among Catholic intellectuals, especially in recent years. Given the climate among Catholic theorists today, for a prominent member of that faith (and a former socialist to boot) to produce an articulate defense of human liberty—well, even David Hume might consider this adequate empirical evidence for miracles.

Unfortunately, Novak's conversion was not miraculous enough. It took him to neoconservatism rather than libertarianism. In his new book, we are warned against lapsing into a horror called "radical individualism," and we are assured that "democratic capitalism" is not identical with the free market; it is a market system "checked by a political system and a moral-cultural system." Not only does Novak wish to keep various features of the welfare state intact, but he regards the regulation of "international trade and internal competition" as compatible with his vision of democratic capitalism. Perhaps Hume wouldn't be so impressed after all.

This tension pervades the entire book. Novak praises the virtues of a free market—he even defends the profit motive and places corporate executives on the same creative level as artists and intellectuals. But intermingled with this hymn to the blessings of liberty is the ever-present political "check" on the alleged excesses of the marketplace. Thus does the defense of liberty die the death of a thousand qualifications (to borrow a phrase from Antony Flew).

This ideological confusion results from Novak's failure to delineate unambiguously the relationship between "democracy" and "capitalism." Democracy and capitalism have the same historical roots, according to Novak—they both developed as a means to limit the power of the state—and "the natural logic of capitalism leads to democracy." If there is truth in these assertions, it requires careful qualification. Some early defenders of the free market, like the Physiocrats, opposed democracy, whereas certain defenders of democracy, particularly the followers of Rousseau, have proved hostile to individual liberty. It would have been helpful if Novak had

GEORGE H. SMITH is the author of *Atheism: The Case Against God* and is writing a book on the history of education.

addressed the warnings of Tocqueville, Talmon, and others on the threat of totalitarian democracy.

Just what is this politico-economic system that Novak calls democratic capitalism? While the economic aspect is clearly enough a free market based on private property, Novak is less precise in explaining the democratic feature. Obviously he does not favor unlimited majority rule. Where, then, are the boundaries? Where are the moral limits beyond which the majority may not transgress? "Conscience," Novak contends, "is the taproot of democratic capitalism," so he is unwilling to sacrifice religious liberty to the demands of an intolerant majority. And he is more aware than most neoconservatives that liberty is cut from whole cloth. To section off one sphere of human liberty, like religion, as inviolate, while conceding that other areas, such as economic liberty, may be restricted for the "common good" if democratic procedure is followed, is to undercut the moral foundation of liberty and to endanger its future existence in all

justification and sanction. A theory of rights is needed to determine the limits of political authority, and it is a significant weakness of Novak's book that he fails to develop any such foundation. He does refer to rights favorably, but he neglects to provide an adequate defense of them or explain their role in his scheme of democratic capitalism.

THESE DEFECTS HOWEVER, are far outweighed by the merits of the book, including lucid discussions and valuable insights reminiscent of F. A. Hayek. Novak's examination of the antimarket bias of Catholic theologians, and his reply to their objections, are especially noteworthy. Unlike von Hoffman, who sees enlightened progressivism in papal condemnations of the free market, Novak sees the residues of the feudal mentality and an abysmal ignorance of the most basic economics. He repeatedly calls attention to the moral and spiritual character of voluntary exchange, including money, the profit motive, and—yes—even

neoconservatives. But, contrary to enemy propaganda, libertarians have always recognized the need for moral underpinnings in a free society: the respect for individual rights. The real issue is whether the government should promote "virtue" in its citizens through coercive institutions and measures like public schools, prohibiting drugs, and regulating consensual sexual conduct.

Novak develops the theme of a spontaneous order in more detail than most neoconservatives, so he has more regard for individual liberty than many of his allies. Hence his book is refreshingly free of the usual neoconservative harangues about cracking down on pornography, drugs, prostitution, and other victimless crimes. He also seems to realize that a free society cultivates many of the values he cherishes. Judging by his insight that "the public enforcement of virtue" is more suited to socialism than to capitalism, and by his spirited defense of "cultural pluralism," Novak seems to veer to the libertarian side of this controversy.

Given his basic instincts—his background in the antiwar movement, his respect for civil liberties, his understanding of the moral significance of voluntary interaction—why does Novak remain in the neoconservative camp? Part of the reason, I suspect, lies in his misunderstanding of the libertarian tradition. His passing remarks about "radical individualism" recall the old charge that libertarians have an atomistic view of society and fail to appreciate the crucial role of association and communal bonds. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Libertarians have traditionally opposed state power because it pollutes and destroys the benefits of voluntary social relationships. Society vs. the State has been a persistent theme in the history of libertarian thought. But if Novak is misinformed, he has a lot of company. The myth of social "atomism" has haunted the image of radical individualism ever since historians antagonistic to individualism decided to write its history.

"The first of all moral obligations," writes Novak, "is to think clearly," and he appears determined to follow his own advice wherever it leads him. Clear thinking has convinced him that democratic socialism is "incoherent." A bit more of the same tonic should soon lead him out of the morass of neoconservatism as well. □

A theory of rights is needed to determine the limits of political authority—Novak fails on this count.

spheres. Novak's "democratic capitalism" is akin to "democratic religion," in which religious freedom is permitted up to the point where the majority, utilizing the democratic process, determines that a particular faith is contrary to the common good and must suffer the penalty of the law. Of course, Novak would not endorse this kind of democracy. Why then is he so enthralled by the idea of fettering the market by democratic controls?

Novak rests a good deal of his moral defense of democratic capitalism on the premise that it furthers the common good. His case is often convincing and elegant, drawing on such ideas as the "invisible hand," spontaneous order, and value pluralism. But the "common good" is a *consequence* of a free society; it does not provide a standard to prevent the incursions of majority rule on the rights of individuals and minorities. The common good, in other words, is the unintended result of liberty, not its moral

"big" business. As he puts it: "In this sense, a defense of the free market is, first, a defense of efficiency, productivity, inventiveness, and prosperity. It is also a defense of the free conscience—free not only in the realm of the spirit, and not only in politics, but also in the economic decisions of everyday life. It is, thirdly, a defense of the pluralist order of democratic capitalism against the unitary and commanded order of socialism."

If Novak embraces neoconservatism, he diverges from that school in a crucial respect. Neoconservatives typically stress the need for *virtue*, whereas libertarians stress the need for *liberty*, as a precondition of a prosperous social order. This is a question of priority that has plagued theorists for centuries. Novak seems uncertain which road to take. In his emphasis on moral and cultural values, and especially in his emphasis on the role of the family in a free society, Novak appears to side with the

I'M DANCING AS FAST AS I CAN,
directed by Jack Hofsiss.

DINER, directed by Barry Levinson.

Formula flicks

STEPHEN HARVEY

BACK IN THE OLDEN DAYS—circa 1946—the Darryl Zanucks and Louis B. Mayers were often accused of strangling the performers they employed in a hammerlock of typecasting. It was always Linda Darnell pouting and sticking out her chest in costume romances and *films noirs*, Greer Garson dispensing gracious gentility in one storm-in-a-teacup after another. You'd think things would be different, now that big-league performers are free agents with the clout to shape their own screen destinies. But without any moguls left to pickle and preserve their star images, today's luminaries have simply gone out and done the job for themselves. There must be a clause stuck into every contract Jane Fonda signs, to insure that halfway through the script her character will undergo a heart transplant and a graft of conscience, so that she can emerge at the last fadeout as a caring and committed Human Being. Sissy Spacek is inevitably pale and frail but spunky and clean-hearted, whether those skim-milk eyes widen anxiously to focus on the sights of Nowhere, Texas, or Limbo, Latin America. And Marsha Mason's movie world, of course, is bounded on all four sides by Neil Simon.

Yet not even Mason inhabits a terri-

tory as claustrophobic as Jill Clayburgh's high-tech Independence Hall. For the last few years, Clayburgh has stepped briskly past vistas of New York and Chicago and Washington and Rome in variations of the same silk white-collar frock, as the Exemplar Of Our Age—the working-world achiever with the topsy-turvy private life. She's toiled in an art gallery, sung coloratura, solved arcane mathematical equations, and served on the Supreme Court, taking an occasional coffee break to ponder such spicy dilemmas as marital abandonment, incest, polyandry, and mere garden-variety sexism. Just like the sturdy ladies who adorn the pages of *Self* magazine, Clayburgh wouldn't be human if she didn't have a few shaky moments—*An Unmarried Woman* demonstrated that she's one of the most convincing barbers in the business, and in her current effort she transcends even that achievement. But mostly she's our Surrogate Coper—her public isn't expected to admire her acting so much as her symbolic potency, as she pulls herself up by the pantyhose and faces a better tomorrow as Her Own Person.

By now, a resumé for any Clayburgh vehicle must address just three basic questions: Which high-pressure glamour job does she hold this time? Does her lifestyle unfold in a loft, brownstone, or high-rise? and, What psychological roadblock is going to thwart her momentarily along the road to self-fulfillment? To these burning issues *I'm Dancing As Fast As I Can* replies as follows: (a) Emmy-winning producer of TV documentaries, (b) a one-bedroom apartment with minimalist white accessories in a prewar building on the Upper West Side, and (c) a dependence on Valium, complicated by unfinished business in her relationship with her late father, and the looming Nicol Williamson as her live-in boyfriend.

Director Jack Hofsiss shoves the camera up close on Clayburgh every time her face contorts into a beet-red rictus of anguish and degradation—this and the clutzy framing and fuzzy, denatured color are supposed to convey that what we're watching is an unflinching study of a harrowing con-

temporary malady. Then why does this movie come off as something like *Mommie Dearest* without the shoulder pads? Perhaps it's because the script by David Rabe (Clayburgh's husband and, like Hofsiss, a movie neophyte with a classy stage pedigree) is a series of screechily trilled high notes and no recitative. Everything is stripped away from this story save Clayburgh and her dilemma, and without any context for these twitches and tirades to reverberate off, she seems less victim than exhibitionist. This woman is all symptoms and no motivation; from the first time you see her, supervising the editing of her TV show about a middle-aged poet (Geraldine Page) dying of cancer, all Clayburgh does is ingest—wads of gum, packs of cigarettes, and pills, pills, pills, which she inhales like an upright Hoover. Her liaison with Williamson, he of the pink corrugated brow and sweaty sneer, is another baffling given, considering the utterly inert chemistry of their scenes together. The choice of this particular actor to play opposite her seems inspired by nothing but the wish to find someone even battier than the heroine—particularly after this fun couple have barricaded themselves inside their digs while she tries to kick tranquilizers—and Heaven knows Williamson fills that bill without half trying.

The subject of Clayburgh's documentary frequently accuses our heroine of being a narcoleptic narcissist, but it's rather hard to blame her for that, since in this movie's world there's so little to distract her from total absorption on Number One. No director seems to have shot her latest video opus—there's just Boss Lady and a clutter of yes-persons mumbling and taking notes. Apparently, nobody lives on the other side of the walls of the Clayburgh/Williamson ménage, since their constant chorus of sobs, socks, and screams doesn't elicit so much as a single thump of a broomstick against their sturdy plaster walls. The movie's refusal to let any sense of naturalistic texture upstage its heroine's travails reduces the work to an abstract display of its star's virtuosity. In one hilarious passage, Clayburgh mutters that she feels like a bar of soap, an inapt analogy if there ever was one, considering that while a bar of Camay is a hard, smooth, noiseless lump, Clayburgh does nothing but quiver and screech. A curious detachment sets in whenever the movie halts

STEPHEN HARVEY is *INQUIRY's* film reviewer and the coordinator of the film study program at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

so that the star can yank out the stops one more time. Look at how convincingly she's learned to arch her back and clatter her teeth, you muse, as the heroine suffers a convulsion on the beach while in the throes of withdrawal. See how willing Clayburgh is to disfigure herself for her art, as the protagonist sports a purple, scabby bruise on her lip after an uneven battle with her apartment-mate.



The movie's intentions really short-circuit during the film's last third, set in the mental institution where Clayburgh stops dancing and tries to get her act together. Reels of subplot were apparently hacked out of the film before the final cut, since such stalwart character actors as Kathleen Widdoes and Daniel Stern just mill about wordlessly in the background of Clayburgh's close-ups. It's supposed to be a sign of health that Clayburgh stops resisting the ministrations of her therapist, played by Dianne Wiest. The truth is that Wiest's moist, narrowed eyes and imperturbable, sticky drone could spook anyone. Her casting is as eccentric as the choice of edgy Geraldine Page as the soul of no-nonsense rectitude in the face of disaster. With role-models like these, Clayburgh might just as well have upped the ante from Valium to Thorazine. Needless to say, by the last reels the diva finds herself, but then she always does; all I want to know is what illicit substance Hofsiss and Rabe were on when they were concocting this hop-headed movie.

I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD want to see another male-rite-of-passage movie with the usual stack of rock-and-roll platters by The Platters over the soundtrack. But *Diner* is an unexpectedly disarming movie, thanks to the exuberant tang of its writing and the relaxed but unusually observant acting provided by an ensemble of mostly obscure young performers. For all its *American Graffiti* overtones, if *Diner* resembles anything it's *I Vitelloni* transplanted to Eisenhower-era Baltimore. Like Fellini's "overgrown calves," Barry Levinson's band of underachieving pals are a group testimonial to the bittersweet savor of arrested development. Aged twenty or so, they look back on their high-school exploits with the paralyzed nostalgia of Chekhov's three sisters longing for their Moscow youth. Only those who shared their teenage past could understand their humor or commiserate with their protracted growing pains, so it's natural that the only relationships that really count for them are with each other. Women are a mysterious species, essential but peripheral, to be tricked or derided with casual contempt. Nightly reunions spent in a fluorescent-lit hash house are both an escape from the strain of all that, and the only part of their daily lives that feels real to them all.

Beneath its rollicking surface, *Diner* resonates with a subtle undertone of despair—these child-men are destined to stumble into a listless adulthood ruled by their ninth-grader instincts and petrified macho attitudes, but Levinson's script is too subtle to underscore that knowledge for us; we're allowed to figure all that out from our vantage point at an adjacent table, overhearing their rowdy interplay delivered between bites of french fries smothered in brown gravy. Although the group's cohesiveness is paramount, *Diner's* pungency comes from the very individual and nuanced quality of each of the characters. Shrevie (Daniel Stern) is a sardonic stork who uses his knowledge of rock-and-roll trivia to flay his hapless spouse; Eddie (Steve Guttenberg), aimless and amiable, exerts his fragile superiority over his fiancée with his encyclopedic command of football lore—if she doesn't pass his final exam on pigskiniana, he isn't going to marry her, paid-up trousseau notwithstanding. A languid-eyed Lothario with a penchant for gambling he can ill afford, Mickey Rourke's Boogie stands slightly apart

from the rest of his crowd; he may indulge in the old cock-in-the-popcorn-box routine at the movies to get a rise out of his latest conquest, but something veiled and pinched in his glance conveys the knowledge that all this joky camaraderie isn't leading anywhere, and the prospect of a life fixing up tract homes with aluminum siding is another suffocating blind alley. Fenwick (Kevin Bacon) is the sad joker in the deck, a boozy WASP more than willing to self-destruct so long as, in the doing, he can defy his family's expectations of middle-class sobriety and achievement. Bacon, who has been cutting ever more conspicuous swaths for himself off-Broadway in the last few seasons, has the mesmerizing pathos of a smug weasel stepping backwards into a sprung-steel trap; wily and wired, baby-faced but desiccated, he's reminiscent of Richard Widmark in his early gallows-giggle days.

Diner marks Levinson's directorial debut, and up to now his principal writing credits were on the Carol Burnett Show and as co-scripter for the strident . . . *And Justice for All*, and the maudlin *Inside Moves*. With a curriculum vitae like that, he hardly prepared me for the unforced assurance and real feeling for people this movie contains. Maybe he's so eloquent here because he's evoking his own youthful recollections, which might further explain why the film tends to back down from its darker implications toward the end, going soft and making cute to convince us what sweeties these kids really are. Boogie dons a floppy hat and gallops off after a patrician equestrienne; how this inner-city denizen ever learned to ride a horse is a moot point, since this is one of those darling scenes calculated to charm us, like the ersatz-impromptu jam session in a strip joint during which the actor playing Eddie all of a sudden starts giving off sparks like a road-company Richard Dreyfuss. Eddie's tyrannical grilling of his would-be bride is played strictly for laughs, cued by the arbitrary device of withholding the hapless girl from our view even at her eventual wedding. At this point, Levinson seems to shift from wry observer to willing accomplice, which leaves a taste more bitter than the candid disillusionment his film has been hinting at all along. Still, *Diner* dishes out something a lot more nourishing than the junk food it promised—it's a simmering movie about static lives. □

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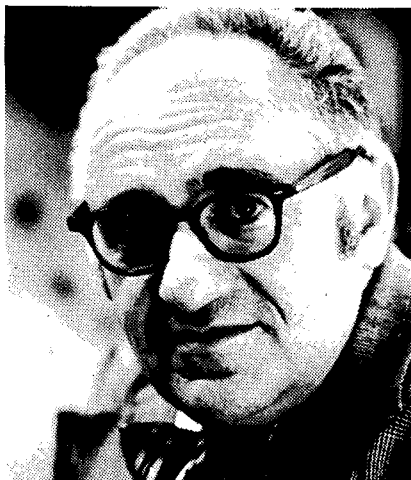
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Reviewed by Roy A. Childs, Jr.

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This indeed, is one of the many important contributions this book makes. The moral spell which socialists and

"a guide to the libertarian ideology, and to a theory of justice which is as profound as it is passionate and relevant."

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radical movement.

The Ethics of Liberty is nothing less than a handbook, a guide, to the libertarian ideology, and to a theory of justice which is as profound as it is passionate and relevant. Rothbard is not Robert Nozick's equal (in his *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*) in pure, technical, philosophical razzle-dazzle, or in his mastery of contemporary ethical doctrines. What *The Ethics of Liberty* gives us instead is a classical political treatise in the tradition of John Locke or Herbert Spencer.

There are so many breathtaking insights scattered throughout this work that one scarcely knows where to begin. In terms of its importance, this is Murray Rothbard's *magnum opus*. It belongs on a shelf next to Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, Mises' *Human Action*, and Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, as one of the most important works of this — or any other — century. Don't miss it!

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